

# LONDON SOCIETY.

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## THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED  
WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA;  
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT;  
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS  
WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'

## CHAPTER I.

**Old Vauxhall and Places of Fashion.**

SHAKESPEARE AND MUSICAL SANDWICH—CAMBERT ARRIVES—LOCKE'S MUSICAL DRAMAS—THOMAS CLAYTON APPEARS—SIR JOHN VANBRUGH AND THE FINE THEATRE WHERE PEOPLE COULD NOT HEAR—OWEN M'SWINEY—AARON HILL—HEIDEGGER THE UGLY—HANDEL—THE SINGERS' COMPANY—THE STARS OF THE PERIOD, ANASTASIA ROBINSON, SENESINO, CUZZONI, AND FAUSTINA—A COLLAPSE—HANDEL'S TOUR IN ITALY—SUCCESS OF FARINELLI—FATAL RESULT OF HANDEL'S MANAGEMENT. [1705—1740.]

**V**AUXHALL, with its thousand lights, velvet lawns, and shady avenues; York Buildings, with its smart vocalists and admiring crowds; the Folly on the Thames, offering its smoking-rooms, elegant music-hall, and ceaseless round of pleasure; Marybone Gardens, with its bowling-green, bowers, and lamps; the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with its exciting comedies, brilliant concerts, and pleasant musical interludes; Drury Lane, with its Shakspearian attractions;—all these places of fashionable resort were in their meridian glory when the Royal Italian Opera was but a struggling neophyte. Music, it is true, had not yet arrived at that degree of perfection which rendered it worthy of being discussed by patched and powdered Pretty Fellows, who confined their fastidious attention and artistic aspirations to sewing and knitting of garters, knotting of fringe, the artful disposition of China jars, and the nice conduct of a clouded cane. Young belles, spending their days lounging in India-houses, buying ivory fans and Japan cabinets, talking scandal and meditating fresh frolics, dreamt not of Opera boxes, Crystal Palace Opera Concerts, or of packets of illuminated songs from the last new opera. As yet unknown to fame were big lorgnettes, black or white; unknown were snowy cravats, 'bones,' neat broughams, white and gold bournousses, and Covent Garden bouquets. Unfamiliar in the mouths of the amateurs was the language of the cognoscenti; strange

in their ears would have sounded the notes of those wonderful instruments, the invention of the very names whereof demands talent of no ordinary nature. The Opera was as yet a thing of the future; and Tatlers, Spectators, Commentators, and Guardians had not yet the opportunity of exercising their cutting wit and biting sarcasm on basso, tenor, and chorus: coffee-house wits and Hell-fire Clubbists had no prima donna or ballerina to criticise or to adore.

In the time of the First Charles, London Society, wanting opera, testified its longing by patronizing Shakspearian tragedies interspersed with tender melodies, and by applauding musical interludes of an exceedingly mild description. The singers, however, were deplorably bad; and there were no concerts or public places to give employment to even these vocalists. The companies at the theatres were small, and composed of inferior actors; and those who were foolish enough to depend upon their vocal abilities for a livelihood had little to rely on besides the royal household and chapel establishments, the liberality of the sovereign, and the patronage of the great. Nothing was known of opera but the name, which the dramatists sometimes used.

Charles II., albeit he starved his singers, liked music, and once wrote a song himself. He had a slight knowledge of music, understood the notes, and could sing 'a plump bass.' Admiring everything French, he brought with him a taste for French music, and was quite pleased when Cambert—organist of the church of St. Honoré, in Paris, and the first French musician who tried to set operas—quitted France in a huff at being displaced from the management of the Opera in favour of Lully, and came to London. His merry Majesty had his band of twenty-four violins in imitation of the band of King Louis, and he immediately installed Cambert at their head. The Frenchman made many efforts to persuade the English to like his operas, but at last he broke his heart at the indifference with which he and his works

were treated, and died nine years after his arrival. Yet attempts at operatic music were now becoming greatly the fashion. Pepys, in 1667—the year Cambert died—went with my Lord Brouncke to his house, there to hear some Italian music, with which the genial old gossip was 'mightily pleased.' The witty, dashing Tom Killigrew, King Charles's jester, who was present on that occasion, had already visited Rome eight or ten times for the sake of hearing good music, and was very anxious to bring forward Italian pieces.

When it was discovered that his newly-restored Majesty was fond of music, composers speedily started into being. Matthew Locke—most peevish of geniuses—brought out the 'Tempest' in 1673 at the theatre which had been opened in Lincoln's Inn Fields two years before by the son and the widow of Sir William D'Avenant. The expensive decorations of scenery and dresses, the singing and dancing, and the fine music, made this piece extraordinarily popular. The public were delighted. Everybody ran to see the new work, and its success induced D'Avenant to produce other musical dramas by Locke. The directors of Drury Lane were alarmed at the repeated successes achieved at the Duke's Theatre, and employed a miserable writer of bad farces to parody Locke's pieces; but the Duke's Theatre continued to be thronged. Two years later, Purcell, most original of composers and irregular of *bons vivants*, then a lad of nineteen, composed a musical drama, which created a great excitement in private circles. D'Avenant, hearing of its merits, proposed to bring it forward in public, to which young Purcell joyfully agreed. It succeeded; and D'Avenant brought out several pieces by Purcell, which were all received with the utmost approbation by the public.

Musical dramas, not always of the liveliest nature, became the rage, and the performers therein sought after celebrities. Moll Davies captivated King Charles by her bird-like notes; pleasant Miss Shore played to such good purpose on the

harpichord that she stole the heart of Colley Cibber, who enthusiastically threw his hand, heart, and seventy-five pounds a year at her feet. Miss Campion sang so enchantingly that the aged Duke of Devonshire took her off the stage.

However, musical dramas are not operas, and the world of fashion wanted real opera. A great crisis invariably brings forth a great man. The great man who undertook the task of supplying the fashionable world with grand opera was Thomas Clayton. He was a miserable pretender, though he was in King William's band; he was utterly devoid of genius, or even talent; but he had a great deal of tact, he was specious and plausible, and just the man to successfully impose on the unsuspecting. He went to Italy, to improve himself by study, and having there heard the opera, thought what a fine thing it would be to have the credit of introducing it into England, and that it might be a money-making speculation. He by some means possessed himself of a bundle of songs, and with these returned to London.

There were only two theatres open then—Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. Sir John Vanbrugh, with the aid of a subscription of thirty thousand pounds, given by 'persons of quality,' was building the Queen's Theatre, but it was not finished. Clayton commenced his campaign by taking Drury Lane, and engaging the best company in London, headed by the lovely Mrs. Tofts, and the 'tawny Tuscan,' Margarita de l'Epine, both prodigious favourites, and by Leveridge, a most popular singer. Then he produced his opera of 'Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus.' The pit and boxes were reserved for the subscribers; the rest of the house was open, as usual at the subscription music.

The public were surprised, delighted, with this new species of amusement; though the critics who wrote of the music call it 'worthless,' 'execrable,' 'contemptible,' 'miserable,' 'trash.' Clayton had succeeded in inventing a novelty; and although his opera, both music and

words, were utter rubbish, yet it was the talk of the coffee-houses, India-houses, and drawing-rooms all over London.

Sir John Vanbrugh opened his theatre almost as soon as Clayton's opera began. He had proposed to Betterton's company to build a stately theatre in the Haymarket, and his offer was accepted. He obtained a grant from Queen Anne, and a subscription from the nobility, and in 1704 was laid the first stone, on one side of which was inscribed *KIT CAT*, and on the other *THE LITTLE WHITE*, the latter being in honour of the beautiful Lady Sunderland, second daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, a celebrated toast. The house was opened in 1705; Betterton and his co-partners dissolving their own agreement, and placing themselves under the joint management of Vanbrugh and Congreve. On the opening of this grand and superb structure, April 9, 1705, it was discovered that almost every qualification and convenience of a good theatre had been sacrificed to display a vast triumphal piece of architecture. Immense columns, gilded cornices, and an immoderately high roof did not compensate for the defect which caused nine words out of ten to be carried off. They had Signor Greber's '*Loves of Ergasto*,' which was acted every evening till the end of June. Theatre, pastoral, and managers failed, while Clayton was taking the town by storm. Sir John, tired or frightened, disposed of the entire establishment to Owen M'Swiney, who rented the house at five pounds a day. The company returned to Lincoln's Inn Fields, grievously disappointed with the result of their speculation.

Clayton relinquished his management in 1707, and went to York Buildings. The companies of the Queen's Theatre and Drury Lane then united and went from Drury Lane to the Haymarket, under the command of Owen M'Swiney. Owen was an Irishman, and had a fair share of the quickness of his nation, though he is called by Dibden 'a shuttlecock.' He had written a farce, and two opera libretti, and was the

kind of man to make a dash at anything, without suffering from an over-scrupulous conscience.

Italian singers, hearing that there was an opportunity of pocketing some bright English guineas, and being attracted 'by the report of our passion for opera,' had come to England. Among these was Nicolini, a Neapolitan. A magnificent actor and a superb-looking man, his voice was the admiration of all who heard him. Even Steele, so bitter against opera singers in general, dilates on the grace and propriety of the handsome Italian's action and gestures, which he declares did honour to the human figure. M'Swiney immediately engaged him at a salary of eight hundred guineas for the season—a sum considered enormous at the time. He retired in 1712, when he returned to Italy, and, building for himself a splendid villa, named it, as a testimony of his gratitude to the nation which had contributed the wealth amassed by him, *THE ENGLISH FOLLY*.

On the arrival of the Italians, operas were performed partly in English and partly in Italian, which drew down great laughter and derision from the wits of the day.

When M'Swiney withdrew from the management in 1710, there is every reason to suppose that he left the debts incurred during his theatrical reign unpaid; for the tradesmen who furnished dresses and other properties, advertised a general meeting to concert measures for petitioning the Lord Chamberlain, or commencing lawsuits against the manager, who peremptorily refused payment, although the articles were in constant use. As this advertisement was issued December 1711, and Aaron Hill was then manager, it is to be presumed that he declined paying the debts of his predecessor.

Aaron Hill, who became proprietor of the Haymarket (at a rental of six hundred pounds), and manager both of that theatre and Drury Lane, came into possession June 1710. He had travelled all over Europe in a strange, fitful way; had written several dramatic pieces;



he perfectly understood the secret of pleasing the public, and of attracting crowded audiences; and was endowed with a certain degree of cleverness. His tact particularly fitted him for undertaking the management of a large operatic establishment. His first great success was the opera of 'Thomyris,' put together and conducted by the newly-arrived 'Swiss Count,' John James Heidegger, who 'by that production alone was a gainer of five hundred pounds.' Heidegger, who afterwards became manager, created an extraordinary sensation in the fashionable world on his arrival. His speciality consisted in being 'the ugliest man of his time,' his portrait in that capacity being engraved at least ten or twelve times. Lord Chesterfield wagered that it would be an impossibility to find a second human being so horribly unfavourable by nature. Heidegger, who was as good-humoured as he was hideous, or as anxious to make money as he was unscrupulous regarding the means by which he acquired it, readily accepted the bet; and a search was instituted. After some time, a frightful old woman was discovered; and it was agreed that Heidegger had the day. Heidegger was about to triumph, when Chesterfield suddenly demanded that he should put on the old creature's bonnet. Thus equipped, Heidegger appeared so fearfully ugly (although he was robust, tall, and well made) that, amid an explosion of laughter, Chesterfield was at once declared victor. On another occasion, one Jolly, a well-known tailor, presenting himself with his bill before a noble duke, his Grace, to gain time, declared with an oath at his ugly visage, 'I will never pay you till you bring me an uglier fellow than yourself!' Jolly bowed; and retiring, sent a message to Heidegger, saying that 'his Grace wished to see him the next morning on particular business.' Heidegger attended, when Jolly was there to meet him. The result was, as soon as the Fleming's visit was over, 'Jolly received the cash.' Having lost all his credit abroad, Heidegger

had sought England as a harbour of refuge, and enlisted in the Guards for protection from his duns. Such was his boundless impudence, and such his insinuation, that he gained access in the most familiar manner to the society of the young 'sprigs of fashion,' by whom he was denominated the Swiss Count. Another very ridiculous story is told of him, which happened some years subsequently to this. The facetious Duke of Montague, projector of the bottle conjuring affair, had a mask made exactly like Heidegger's face, and a dress similar to that which he was to wear at a masquerade, in which he disguised a person of something the same figure as Heidegger. The night the trick was to be played, the conspirators waited until Heidegger, on the arrival of the royal party, had given the band orders, to perform 'God save the King,' and had retired. The moment he had quitted the orchestra, the mock Heidegger ordered the band to strike up 'Over the Water to Charley.' The assembly were aghast, and Heidegger ran back in horror, swearing that the band were drunk or mad, and ordered them furiously to recommence 'God save the King.' The instant he went away, the false Heidegger commanded 'Over the Water to Charley' again. The king and his courtiers were delighted, and the affair went on till the band were kicked out of the orchestra, and Heidegger became nearly insane. The mock Heidegger then stepped forward, and assured the king that he was the true Heidegger, and that the other was only the Devil in his likeness. The two Dromios were confronted, the false Heidegger having the advantage of being supported by the judges to whom the appeal was made. At last, the Duke of Montague, in pity to the poor man, who was now almost 'stark mad with distraction and vexation,' made the impostor unmask, and the joke was laughed off; not, however, till Heidegger had obtained a promise that the mask should be melted down in his presence, that there might be no further chance of being mistaken for the

Devil. Pope introduced this individual into his 'Dunciad,' thereby adding but little to his notoriety. Dr. Arbuthnot inscribed to him a poem called the 'Masquerade,' 'in which he seems more severe upon the Count's ugliness, which he could not help,' says Dr. Burney, 'than on his voluntary vices.'

Aaron Hill had just entered on his management when Handel arrived in England, on a special invitation from some noblemen who had heard his music in Hamburg. The great maestro was then twenty-seven, and had acquired a splendid reputation all over Europe. Hill immediately called on him, and asked him to write a piece for the Haymarket Theatre, to which Handel readily agreed. The manager then wrote a libretto, selecting the romantic history of Rinaldo and Armida, from Tasso's 'Jerusalem Delivered,' which he gave to Giacomo Rossi, a poet of considerable merit, to translate into Italian. Rossi wrote as fast as he could, yet was quite unable to keep pace with Handel, who composed so rapidly that the music was completed in a fortnight.

Hill spared no expense in producing 'Rinaldo,' which was brought out in the February of 1711. It was his object, he declared, 'to give to two senses an equal pleasure,' and among other innovations, he filled the garden of Armida with living birds, which created a great sensation, though they would persist in flying at the lights, and were dominated 'sparrows,' by Addison. He had also a real fountain. The opera was mounted elaborately, and was performed fifteen times in succession, a rare occurrence in those days. The cavatina in the first act, 'Cara sposa,' was to be found upon all the harpsichords in the kingdom, as a model of pathetic grace; the march was adopted by the Life Guards, who played it every day upon parade for forty years, and was sung in the 'Beggars' Opera' twenty years after it was composed. Walsh, the publisher, was said to have gained fifteen hundred pounds from the publication of 'Rinaldo,' which caused Handel to write com-

plainly:—'My dear Sir,—As it is only right that we should be upon an equal footing, *you* shall compose the next opera, and *I* will sell it.'

Clayton, who was then at York Buildings, was in such a rage at the success of 'Rinaldo,' that he wrote angrily to the 'Spectator.' Steele also wrote against it; but the public would persist in going to the Opera to hear the new work. At that time the house was not open on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the hour of performance being six o'clock. In 1712, on the contrary, the performance took place on those very evenings.

Heidegger became Aaron Hill's partner in 1711; but immediately after this, Hill had a dispute with the Lord Chamberlain, and threw up his operatic sceptre, which he never resumed. He died in 1749, in his sixty-fourth year. The management was taken in 1712 by M'Swiney. In 1713, 'Teseo,' by Handel, was performed, with new and costly decorations. M'Swiney having vainly tried to obtain a subscription for six nights, gave out tickets for two nights only, throwing the boxes and pit into one. The house was full at each performance; but after the second night M'Swiney suddenly disappeared, without paying the singers' salaries, and leaving the dresses and the scenes unpaid for. M'Swiney ran away to Italy, where he stayed several years. On his return to England, he obtained a place in the Custom House, and was keeper of the King's Mews. He died in 1754, and left his fortune to his favourite, Mrs. Woffington.

On recovering from this confusion, the singers determined on going on with the opera, dividing the profits. They placed themselves under the immediate superintendence of Heidegger. At first the public went very regularly; but the house grew thinner every night. The next season, 1714, appeared the great star, Anastasia Robinson. During Lent, the opera was performed on Thursday, in consequence of the queen usually 'having a withdrawing-room and playing basset every Tuesday evening.' The

following season, the hour of performance was altered to five o'clock, and there was an advertisement issued by the manager: 'Whereas, by the frequent calling for the songs over again, the operas have been too tedious; therefore the singers are forbid to sing any song above once, and it is hoped nobody will call for 'em, or take it ill when not obeyed.' The public grew more indifferent every day, and at last even the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales was not sufficient to fill the house. They tried dancing, they allowed servants to keep places in the boxes, but all their exertions and concessions were unavailing. In 1717-18 there were no operas performed; but Heidegger, who was very zealous in providing amusement for his patrons, organized masquerades, ridottos, and balls, when there were invariably 'some files of musketiers at hand, for the preventing any disturbance which might happen by quarrels, &c.'

In 1720, operas were resumed. In the May of this year, the opera of 'Numitor' was announced. In order to induce people to attend, it was advertised that 'those paying a guinea would be admitted on the stage.' A footman's gallery is mentioned in the papers of this date, with the addition that its frequenters were so insolent and noisy that threats of shutting it were circulated. A company of French comedians then occupied the theatre in the Haymarket, to the ire of the native actors. Aaron Hill wrote to the younger Rich, September 9, 1721, speaking thus: 'I suppose you know that the Duke of Montague and I have agreed that I am to have that house half the week, and the *French vermin* the other half.' This agreement was carried out; and Aaron Hill announced himself manager and director of a new company, formed by ladies and gentlemen who had never appeared on any stage, with the aid of scenery quite novel and upon an improved plan. He opened with his own play of 'Henry II.,' in December 1721.

The opera was then going to ruin, and a subscription was entered into by the nobility, to the extent of fifty

thousand pounds, to establish a new opera. Handel was appointed director, and the committee consisted of noblemen—dukes, earls, lords, generals. Handel was commissioned to form a company: he went to Dresden, where the opera was conducted on a scale of the utmost magnificence, and brought back a select troupe of singers, with Signora Durastanti and Senesino at their head. Senesino became soon the great star of the opera. He was an exquisite singer, and had a majestic figure and a princely deportment; but he was far from being the hero he looked. One evening, when he was singing in 'Julius Caesar,' part of the machinery fell from the roof, just as he had chanted forth the words, in Italian, 'Caesar does not know what fear is!' The poor hero was so frightened, that 'he trembled, lost his voice, and fell crying.' He never spared any energy in his acting, and sometimes threw an amount of force into a part which led him into the most ludicrous situations. One night he was performing as Alexander, when, leading the way to attack the enemy's walls, he drove his sword through the scene, and carried off a pasteboard brick, with which he marched onwards, in triumph. Another night, when stepping into Armida's enchanted bark, he took a stride too long, 'as he was more attentive to the accompaniment of the orchestra than to the breadth of the shore,' when he fell prostrate, and lay for some time in great pain, 'with the end of a wave running into his side.' Another night, he insulted Mistress Anastasia Robinson during the public rehearsal of an opera, and was caned behind the scenes by Lord Peterborough, when he had to go down on his knees and beg pardon. He took a fancy, during the performance of 'Theseus,' to drubbing the Minotaur soundly; and that the man who represented the monster might not object to being thrashed, the lordly singer always gave him a crown in compensation. Being anxious to have the worth of his money, Senesino invariably beat the Minotaur so heartily as to lose breath most seriously, which was often inconvenient, as a

song of triumph had to be vocalized over the vanquished foe. Lord Bathurst, at the age of eighty-seven, used to sing this song, and with much humour imitated the catches of breath with which Senesino interlarded it from his extraordinary exertions. Senesino, in short, was one of the most insolent, swaggering bullies that ever strutted their brief hour before the footlights.

With the exception of Senesino, who was perpetually tormenting him, Handel ruled his operatic troupe with ease. Anastasia Robinson, his prima donna, was an exceedingly good singer, and a very amiable woman. But in an evil hour for himself, he brought over the famous Cuzzoni. No sooner did that 'little syren' appear, than London fairly went out of its senses. She sang so exquisitely, she was so deliciously saucy, she was so regally superb in her ways, she was so incomprehensible, that lords and ladies, courtiers and citizens, young and old, could talk of nothing else. Poor Handel, the haughty, the massive, the irascible, was forced to submit to her countless whims and extravagancies. She would sing how, when, and where she chose. She would sing his music just as she pleased, and he might think himself only too much honoured if she condescended to sing it at all. Handel one day seized her round the waist, and threatened to fling her out of the window. 'I know you are a devil,' he cried, 'but I am Beelzebub, the prince of devils!' She was ill-tempered, she was ugly and ill-made, with a short, squat figure, and a doughy, cross face, only redeemed by a fine complexion; she was silly and fantastical, but she was the reigning queen of the opera, and that was enough. Cuzzoni entered into a coalition with Senesino to torment Handel, for, from the commencement of opera, managers and singers have always been at war. Senesino, who had not the best of tempers, and was excessively arrogant and conceited, treated Handel abominably, and ungratefully, for the great composer had given him fifteen hundred pounds for the season. The maestro threw back

the insolence of Senesino with galling indifference, which added fuel to the fire of hatred, and the audacity of Cuzzoni, with alternate threats and wheedling. The singers cared very little for the indignation which their conduct might create in the breast of Handel, for they felt sure of their popularity with the patrons of the opera, who disliked Handel's sturdy independence.

Hoping to subdue Cuzzoni, Handel engaged the lovely, sylph-like Faustina Bordon, who had a brilliant reputation and a beautiful voice. The unfortunate manager, however, found himself in a more uncomfortable position than ever when he had secured the services of Faustina. Not only did the two singers commence a dreadful war, and fling the whole establishment into confusion, but all musical and fashionable London divided into two bitter factions. One night, the two prima donnas fought on the stage, with the fury of two demons. It would be difficult to say whether the most absurdities were committed by the cantatrice or by their partisans. When one prima donna opened her mouth to sing, the friends of the other would begin to hiss. Ladies of fashion headed the antagonistic parties. The Countess of Pembroke was general of the Cuzzoni forces, the Countess of Burlington and Lady Delawarr led the Faustina battalions. The grace and beauty of the Venetian singer gained for her the favour of the beaux and wits, who were anxious to secure for her undisputed dominion, and did not spare the partisans of her rival. One critic or wit wrote this indignant epigram:

'Old poets sing that beasts did dance,  
Whenever Orpheus played;  
So to Faustina's charming voice  
Wise Pembroke's asses brayed.'

In seven years the fifty thousand pounds subscribed for the Royal Academy of Music was squandered, together with the annual subscription. Despite the admirable works produced by Handel, despite his really magnificent company, and the brilliant appointments of the theatre, the speculation was a complete, a lamentable failure.

When it was discovered that the entire affair had collapsed, the directors entered into an arrangement with Heidegger for opening the King's Theatre with Handel. The great composer went to Italy to engage new singers, but unfortunately did not make a very judicious selection. He was obliged to re-engage Senesino, who had quitted England in 1726 on account of his health. The feud between Senesino and Handel broke out afresh with intense acrimony. The aristocracy hated Handel, and were angry because he had raised the prices on oratorio nights. They therefore gave funds to organize an opposition, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, sending for Porpora to direct it. The moment Senesino heard of this rival establishment, he offered to join it. Cuzzoni, who returned to England in 1734, also joined Porpora's company, which was strengthened by several mutinous members of Handel's troupe.

Deserted by his best singers, Handel went off again to Italy in search of others. He heard Carestini and Farinelli, and had the singular bad taste to give the former the preference. Not only was Carestini inferior to his great rival, but he was insolent and overbearing. Scarcely had he arrived in London before he commenced a warfare against the unlucky maestro. When Handel sent him the beautiful air, 'Verdi prati,' in 'Alcina'—afterwards constantly encored—he returned it, with an impertinent message, as being too trifling for him to sing. Handel went in a towering rage to his lodgings, and, caring nothing for the likelihood of offending his leading vocalist, exclaimed, 'You tog! don't I know better as yourself vaat is pest for you to sing? If you will not sing te song vaat I give you, I will not pay you ein stiver.' Carestini objected to Handel's accompaniments on the harpsichord, which diverted the attention of the audience from the singer; he swore that if Handel did not discontinue his elaborate performance, he would jump upon the instrument, and thus stop the in-

terruption. 'Oh, oh!' cried Handel, 'so you will jump, will you? Very vell, sare; be so kind as tell me de night ven you vill jump, and I vill advertise in de bill, and I sall get grate dale more money by your jumping den I sall get by your singing.'

Porpora had the good fortune to engage Farinelli, and the whole metropolis went into such a state of excitement about this truly great singer, that the 'Nobility's Theatre' was raised to the pinnacle of popularity. There never was a more extraordinary sensation created by any vocalist than by Farinelli. Presents of the utmost value were showered upon him—diamond knee-buckles, diamond rings, bank-notes enclosed in a rich gold case, gold snuff-boxes. All London ran crowding to hear him, and were either melted to tears or raised to enthusiasm by his voice. Even Senesino was obliged to admit that he was unapproachable as a singer. Soon after the arrival of Farinelli, however, Senesino left England, and returned to his native Tuscany.

After the expiration, in 1735, of Handel's contract with Heidegger, he removed to Covent Garden, Porpora going to the King's Theatre. George II. subscribed one thousand pounds towards the expenses of Handel's management, and it was the support of the king and the royal family that enabled him to hold his ground against the aristocracy and his Italian rival.

At last both Handel and Porpora failed, and in 1737 the latter quitted England. Handel joined Heidegger once more, in 1738, at the King's Theatre. In two years he wrote four operas. When he had produced 'Deidamia,' he abandoned dramatic music, and entered on a new and higher phase of his career. During his unfortunate struggle against Porpora and the world of fashion, he had lost his health, he had lost all the money he had made during twenty years of labour, and he had to start anew, at the age of fifty-six, having nothing left but his glorious reputation.

E. C. C.

## REFUSED!

'NOT yours the fault,' you say—not yours?—  
You women keep some bitter cures

For our proud spirits. How I long  
To think you have not done me wrong.  
Believe me, this is half my pain  
To feel I cannot give again  
Respect and trust, which were your due  
When I believed you wholly true!

The words of love you said one day,  
'You meant the next day to unsay.  
And if I thought of them—what then?  
I must be fooled like other men:  
Must learn to woo is not to win:  
That women's falsehoods are not sin;  
Must bear what other hearts have borne.'  
—I give you, lady, scorn for scorn!

It was for *love* I vainly sued!  
It was a *woman* that I wooed!  
Not something in a woman's guise,  
To make my trusting heart a prize—  
Rejoice to feel me in her power—  
Play with her new toy for an hour,  
Then fling it down, with cruel jest,  
And mocking scorn, at my request!

No! it was something kind and true  
I fancied that I saw in you!  
Before a high ideal shrine  
I laid this honest love of mine.  
I woke to find that shrine a dream—  
That maidens are not what they seem.  
Henceforth I, too, will share their mirth,  
And take their *love* for what it's worth!

F. S. M.



## ART IN THE AUCTION ROOM.



CHRISTIE AND MANSON'S SALE ROOM.

EVERYBODY turns with curiosity to the paragraph in the 'Times' that chronicles the 'extraordinary prices' which the pictures of Mr. B—, the porcelain of Lord C—, or the enamels and bijouterie of the Duchess of D—, fetched the day before at Christie's, Phillips's, Foster's, or Sotheby's. But in most readers the curiosity ends with a passing exclamation of surprise. Few, comparatively, outside the regular art circles, ever think of dropping in at one of these sales. Yet, if you are strong enough, or poor enough, to withstand the temptation of bidding, or can keep your bidding propensities within bounds, one or other of the great auction-rooms—for a single visit (or for half a dozen)

you will of course choose Christie's—will yield some pleasant pastime; and it will be your own fault if it do not furnish something to think over afterwards.

More than 'sixty years since'—almost a hundred, in fact—Christie's was, as it still is, the art auction-room, *par excellence*, of the metropolis—though its locale was Pall Mall then instead of King Street as now. Horace Walpole talked as familiarly of going to a sale of pictures or porcelain at Christie's, as Baron Rothschild or Lord Ward, or any more commonplace collector, might to-day. On the whole those must have been brave times for the cognoscenti. There was, for example, a sale of the Penshurst [pictures

(May, 1764), at which, writes Walpole, 'in general the pictures did not go high'—as will be readily supposed when he bought for George Montague 'two sweet children,' by Sir Peter Lely, 'for two pounds ten shillings,' and for himself 'much the best picture in the auction, a fine Vandyck of the famous Lady Carlisle and her sister Leicester in one piece: it cost me nine-and-twenty guineas,' and sold, we may add, at the Strawberry Hill sale for two hundred and twenty guineas.

In those good old times, when cotton lords, and railway kings, and merchant millionaires, and great capitalist picture-dealers, and directors and projectors, whether of limited or unlimited liability, had not spoiled the market, and given to the room in King Street something too much the aspect of one in Capel Court, Christie's was a pleasant place of meeting and easy intercourse for litterateurs and loiterers, artists and amateurs, statesmen and bishops, dilettanti lords and fashionable dames, as well as the resort of keen-eyed dealers, Hebrew bargain-hunters, and the lean and seedy pickers-up of unconsidered trifles. Fine gentlemen and gaily-dressed ladies made it their trysting-place. Sturdy Samuel Johnson (at times with his faithful Bozzy) might be seen there, as well as finical and supercilious Walpole. There, too, came Burke and Goldsmith, Wilson and Fuseli, Gainsborough and Garrick, now giving utterance to a criticism, now to a jest. And there, oracle of every visitor, was Sir Joshua himself, ear-trumpet and snuff-box in hand, paying courteous attention alike to modest scholar, simpering peer, and patronizing peeress:—

\* To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,  
When they judged without skill he was still hard  
of hearing;

When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios,  
and stuff,

He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.\*

Gilray's caricature shows us that Christie's long continued to be a fashionable lounge, where ladies appeared in low dress and feathers, gentlemen as they might have come direct from the drawing-room, doc-

tors in big wigs, and young bucks in cut-away coats and top-boots. Later again, Nollekens Smith records how he has 'often seen Mr. Cosway at the elder Christie's picture-sales, full-dressed in his sword and bag, with a small three-cornered hat on the top of his toupée, and a mulberry silk coat profusely embroidered with scarlet strawberries.' Surely such a visitant must have made radiant the dingy room! Our grandsires, as we very well know, did not always wrap themselves in broad-cloth and dull colours, but a coat like this must have been a rarity, one would fancy, even then. Poor Goldie's famous peach-blossom Filby—at which so many a witling has cast his little joke—would have looked dim alongside Cosway's mulberry silk. Mr. Cosway was a noticeable person in his day; and his presence, apart from his coat, would have brought sunshine any day into this shady place, for he was a lavish purchaser of bric-a-brac. Cosway was the fashionable 'macaroni miniature-painter' of the Regency, prime favourite of the court and courtiers and of the Regent himself. Doubtless the reader saw and admired, and still remembers, his dainty miniatures—marvels of grace and delicate finish—of the 'first gentleman of Europe,' his fair left-handed bride, Mrs. Fitzherbert, and many others, fairer and better than either, which were in the rich and rare Loan Exhibition at South Kensington in 1862. Without setting up for a medium, Cosway, like his contemporary Blake, was wont to hold intercourse with the spirit-world, and was a good deal less startled when he saw, as he told his friends he often did, Pitt or Praxiteles, or it might be Michael Angelo or Charles I., walk into his painting-room, than an assembly at Christie's would now be at such an apparition as that of his dapper little 'monkey-faced figure' (for so the satirists described him) clad in that mulberry silk coat profusely powdered over with scarlet strawberries, sword by his side, and three-cornered hat on the top of his toupée.

But though no such sights, and

few such men, may now be looked for there, Christie's yet offers a phase of London society worth observing. In the thick of the season, on the day of a great picture-sale, or, better still, on the preceding days when the pictures are on view, there is a gathering of art notables of no common mark. You may not meet the young painter or sculptor who has made one of the small sensations of the season—they as yet generally know little and care less about those who have preceded them in the race—but you will most likely see some of their seniors who have come to examine some treasure often heard of, never till now beheld; to chat over some long-hidden and half-forgotten Reynolds or Gainsborough; to see once again works they remember seeing when first exhibited years ago, or perchance to look through the sketches and unfinished works of one who, after long struggling with them in friendly rivalry, only a month or two back succumbed to the inevitable fate. There, too, are kind-hearted though somewhat stately cognoscenti of the old school—a rapidly diminishing class—great in the traditional history of every cherished specimen of Sir Joshua's urbane pencil, and the more famous examples of Italy and the Netherlands; and by them are the brisker and more æsthetical, but not less positive, and much less civil, dictators who now rule supreme in the realms of taste. There, again, are men of patrician eminence and historic name, anxious to add some much-vaunted British or foreign masterwork as a new heirloom to their gallery: hardly less eager, if it be a sale of crockery that is coming on, to secure a pet piece of true old Sévres, or Henri-deux ware, or choice majolica. There also are the directors and keepers of our national collections, and, watching them with envious eye, the agents of foreign monarchs and museums. And then there is also that new class of buyers—product of our own day, spawn of our wealth—the speculative dealers and print publishers, who, as caterers to the hurrying, money-making, picture-buying lords

of the City and the north, have become an almost dominant power in the auction-room as well as in the studio, and who, by dint of never-ending newspaper canards of semi-fabulous prices given for pictures and copyrights, and ambulatory exhibitions with sensation placards and loquacious canvassers, have made their names as familiar in every country town, and almost every village, as in London itself, and who move about here, as elsewhere, under the ever-present consciousness that they are the observed of many observers. The lower strata of buyers and spectators—the Israelitish brokers (Hebrew of the Hebrews); knock-out conspirators (abhorred of amateurs, collectors, and executors); sharp-set agents and small dealers on the watch for 'speculative lots'; and those queer visaged, and more queerly costumed lookers-on of doubtful calling, and sometimes of doubtful nativity and domicile, who may be seen at every important, and almost every unimportant, art-auction, yet never buy or bid for anything—these are likewise in their way a noteworthy race—as our artist has pretty plainly indicated.

And the things to be sold are even better worth looking at than those who come to buy or assist at the buying of them. Pictures somehow always show to especial advantage in the plain business-like rooms in King Street. Our older English pictures seldom look as well elsewhere—as it may be worth remembering if you contemplate investing here an odd hundred or two. Several of the paintings which seemed almost commonplace in the huge galleries of the International Exhibition have since shone like bright particular stars at Christie's. I have heard some excellent judges declare that Christie's is the best art-exhibition of the London season. And with some allowance—and without disparagement to Trafalgar Square—we may admit that it is so. At any rate, it is in many respects the most interesting and suggestive; and certainly it is the most varied, for during the four months you have

not one collection but a constant succession, and of every quality, good, bad, and tolerable, as well as sometimes better and best.

The Christie who built the rooms in King Street, and who, as a Frenchman might say, created the place, died just sixty years ago. It is recorded of him in the contemporary obituary that 'with an easy and gentlemanlike flow of eloquence, he possessed, in a great degree, the power of persuasion.' The visitor will feel that the 'power of persuasion' has been inherited 'in a great degree' by the great man's descendants and successors, but he will witness little 'flow of eloquence' from the King Street rostrum now. That seems to have departed from our high-class auction-rooms with the late George Robins. One of the things in our art-auctions most noticed by our more demonstrative neighbours across the Channel is the quiet, orderly way in which the sale is conducted. As M. René Gersaint, an avowed admirer of our system, writes in the '*Gazette des Beaux-Arts*,' 'The affair proceeds without gesticulation or outcry (but then those English abominate all unnecessary noise), every article being put up and sold strictly in the order of the catalogue.' Very true, retorts M. Ph. Burty, an opponent of M. Gersaint and his Anglomania—very true, but this wouldn't suit the latitude of Paris. Your cold and sensible English auctioneer addresses a public as sensible and as cold. Between the Parisian sales, so animated, noisy, and picturesque, and those silent, regular, and economic London ones, there is, I grant, as much difference as there is between French humour and British temperament. But I confess I prefer our excited, variable, Parisian sales to those frigid, orderly London ones, which follow an arrangement as precise and preordained as a railway time-table. Instead of having a picture sacrificed like a mere piece of merchandise, I am content to see the Parisian expert studying the gradations of enthusiasm in his public, and interrupting the puerile order of the catalogue in order to bring forward

at the right moment a Raffaele or a Prudhon. It is clear at any rate, M. Burty concludes, that this manner of procedure is most likely to have with us French a favourable influence upon the proceeds of the sale.

With us English also, it would seem, from stray allusions in old books and journals, that once upon a time some such management was almost as much the custom at London picture sales as it is now at those of the Hôtel Drouot. At the present day, however, we are content to leave to the auctioneers and their experts of the neighbourhood of St. Paul's or Leicester Square this study of the gradations of enthusiasm in their bidders, for whose behoof a Raffaele or a Morland—a Prudhon, it is to be feared, would be a name unknown to them—is always available at the right moment. Elsewhere we are content as we are. However it may be in Paris, it is pretty clear, from the prices they fetch, that in London good pictures little need any expert jockeying.

The prices obtained for works of art in the auction-room during the last few years, have, indeed, been very remarkable and suggestive, whether regarded as tests of an actual advance in their value, or as an indication of the fluctuations of taste and the influence of fashion. Look, for example, at the Bicknell sale of the last season, where a hundred English pictures sold for 55,000*l.*, their cost to Mr. Bicknell having been less than half that sum: and it was not less remarkable as a sign of the times that the principal purchaser was a Manchester picture-dealer, who bought to the extent of upwards of 30,000*l.*, and that in the very height of the cotton famine!

Take another illustration. One morning—it was the 8th of June, 1774—whilst Sir Joshua Reynolds was painting the portrait of a young bride, Lady Carysfort, the husband, in sauntering round the painting-room, took a liking to a couple of pictures. They were both portraits: but then they were 'fancy portraits'—one being the likeness of a merry

little girl, in semi-rustic costume, holding in her hands a pottle of strawberries; the other, a portrait of Mrs. Hartley and her child, represented as a Bacchante carrying the infant Bacchus on her shoulder. They were painted in the president's best manner, graceful in style, charming in expression, and resplendent in colour, and so my lord thought they would make a very pretty present for his young wife. The painter asked fifty guineas apiece for them—which sum is duly entered as received in his cash-book of that day. Some people cried out that it was an extravagant price for mere portraits—but both painter and purchaser, let us hope, were satisfied. Both we may be sure would have been incredulous if some seer had told them that one of these days these pictures would be eagerly competed for at Mr. Christie's, till, amid ringing cheers which would have astonished our Parisian critics, the hammer fell consigning them to new owners at some forty times their original cost. So it has been, however. The 'Strawberry Girl' was purchased by the Marquis of Hertford at Samuel Rogers' sale in 1856 for 2,100 guineas; whilst Mr. Armstrong bought the 'Mrs. Hartley and Child,' at the sale of Mr. Tunno's pictures in June 1863, for 1,850 guineas.

It is not, however, always in one way that the current runs. My older readers will remember a line engraving that had some popularity in its day: the subject 'Calandrino and his Companions'—the unlucky wight of Boccaccio's story, who, fancying he has found the Eliotropia and become invisible, is receiving with rueful satisfaction the buffets of his wicked companions, who pretend they cannot see him: the painter, H. P. Briggs, R.A. The picture was a large one, almost gallery size, and when exhibited was thought very fine. What was paid for it I don't know. But it was engraved: it found a purchaser; and a prominent place in the drawing-room of a serjeant learned in the law. Well, the years rolled on. In the spring of 1859 it was submitted to Christie's

relentless hammer, and was knocked down to a well-known dealer for some 12 guineas—perhaps about half the cost of the frame. Will there be for it any Resurgam? But pictures are not the only things in which there are these mutations. A few years ago the chief engraver to the Mint was Benedetto Pistrucci, the same who engraved the St. George on the old crown-piece—an Italian by birth, a gem-engraver by profession. He was a great favourite with the old Hamilton school of classic dilettanti, many of whom in good faith declared him to be the prince of modern gem-engravers, and attested their faith by the prices they paid for his works. His masterpiece in this line was a cameo of blue chalcedony of the heads of Augustus and Livia. It was a commission, and he received for it 800*l.*, being the largest sum ever given for such a work. This was about 1819: in 1859 it was sold at Sotheby's on the thirteenth day of the great Hertz sale for 30*l.*

If one could follow the fortunes or trace back the history of half the pictures, prints, gems, vases, what-nots, of which Mr. Christie determines the fate with that cold, impassive, matter-of-fact indifference which so offends M. Burty's sensitiveness, doubtless we should have an infinity of equally noteworthy sermons in stones and canvas. As it is, and lying ready on the surface, recent art-auction prices are so curious and suggestive in many ways that it is surprising no one has thought of bringing together the more remarkable of them. No one, however, having done so, suppose we jot down a few. An exhaustive list—even a moderately full list—is of course out of the question in a paper of this kind. But we may pick out here and there an example, say of the highest prices, in each of the several classes—sufficient for comparison and fairly comprehensive—and thus furnish as suitable, perhaps as agreeable, a conclusion, or at the least one that will be as little tedious, as any other to this desultory paper. But it must be in a second part: the last line of this is run out!

## OUR ENTERTAINMENT.



NOTHING would be more delightful. We should have pleasant occupation for our six weeks' holiday; we should be travelling every day, see a lovely country—

'And have lots of adventures.'

'Pay our expenses as we went.'

'Perhaps have some trifling balance to the good.'

'Why trifling? Very likely make a couple of hundred each.'

'Couple of hundred—oh, come!'

'Why not? Giving it six times a week, and clearing only 10*l.* per night, that's 60*l.* a week. Six sixties three hundred and sixty. I put it at the lowest; supposing we take 20*l.*'

'True. It will be great fun!'

'Great fun!'

The speakers were my old friend and schoolmate, Jack Bradley and myself. We had been thinking how we should spend the vacation accorded by a grateful country and the chiefs of our department. Accidentally, we mentioned the name of the late Albert Smith, which led naturally to that of Mr. Woodin, which led to Charles Mathews's, which led to the German Reeds', John Parry's, the Howard Pauls', and Arthur Sketchley's.

'Why not?' I said, rapidly, as if under the influence of sudden inspiration. 'Why not go about and give an entertainment?'

And indeed, why not? We had



seen all the entertainments, and it seemed easy enough to do—from the stalls.

Both Jack and I were rather celebrities as amateur actors. The back drawing-rooms of Bayswater and Kensington had long been the theatres of our triumphs. In the neighbourhood of Pimlico I was the Fechter, or Alfred Wigan, of private life, as Jack was the Mario, Giuglini, or Sims Reeves of Westbourne Grove. We often regretted that our obscure lot was cast in a humdrum, horse-in-the-mill Government office, and longed for the brilliant triumphs of the theatre; its large emoluments, incessant excitement, and consequent peace of mind, comfort, and enjoyment.

I am sorry to have to force upon my reader a knowledge of the full extent of my accomplishments, but the conduct of my story compels me. I was not only a famous actor (amateur), I was also an author. Yes; on me had fallen the mantle of Molière, and of Shakspeare, and I served the Tragic and the Comic Muses in the double capacity. No one who knows them will accuse amateur actors of egotism, and I think I may fearlessly assert that I was equally excellent as creator as executant; and for the correctness of my statement, I refer my readers to the numerous circle of friends who have so often partaken of my mother's hospitality previous to my private public performances.

I was to write the entertainment, and to speak it. It was to be 'illustrated' with about a dozen songs—English, Scotch, Irish, Italian, French, German, and Welsh. We were not to assume characters, or change our costume, but to act in our customary evening suits of solemn black. We arranged this as being not only an economical, but a gentlemanly thing. If we were asked out—say to the lord-lieutenant's—we could slip away after dinner, delight our audiences for a couple of hours, and return.

And apropos of the lord-lieutenant: we did not venture to start in England, where we were known, nor in Scotland, where we had re-





lations; we therefore resolved to begin our campaign in Ireland—to commence in the provinces, gain confidence as we progressed to the cities, and finally bear down in triumph upon Dublin.

We often used to dispute as to who originated the idea of our tour. I need hardly say that the suggestion came from me.

'It was my notion,' Jack would say.

'No. It was mine.'

'Mine.'

Poor Bradley had but one fault, and that was an extraordinary and monstrous egotism.

We sneaked up a dirty lane that led to a printing-office, and ordered our posters. They were in two long strips, on one of which was printed

'MELODIES OF M  
and on the other

'ANY LANDS, THIS EVENING.'

which with the words 'with Patter and Chatter on every Matter,' was the title of our entertainment—an alliterative jingle, which, printed in large capitals, would look proudly in the bills. I shall never forget our delight at the first proof of our posters, which were on green and yellow paper—a delicate compliment to the opinions of all classes of our prospective patrons.

I wrote and committed to memory. Jack selected music, practised, and in time we were perfect. And with light hearts, heavy boxes, a few pounds in our porte-monnaies—not forgetting the glorious green and yellow posters—we started for Dublin *via* Holyhead.

While walking down Dame Street, we met Desmond O'Sullivan, who had formerly been in our office. Desmond was a thorough Dublin man, with the Dublin man's hat, the Dublin man's back, and the Dublin man's look; half-benevolent, half-*blagueur*. To him we imparted our intentions.

'Is it to give an entertainment?' said he, highly amused with the idea.

We mentioned that we intended to 'throw off' at a town, which I will call here Shandranaghan.

Desmond started.

'Is it Shandranaghan?' he said.

We assured him that it was, and asked him to recommend us to a good pianist.

'Is it a pianist?' he said. It was his peculiarity that he conducted every conversation in questions, and that they always began with the words 'Is it?'

He introduced us to a pianist, as agreeable and hearty a fellow as himself; who enjoyed the thought of the trip amazingly, and laughed at every syllable that was uttered to him.

'Is Shandranaghan a good town for this sort of thing?' we inquired.

'Indeed,' replied Rourke, the pianist, 'and I've never been there; but I don't see why not.'

This, though negative, was consoling. We ordered our full bills, commenced our musical rehearsals, and our correspondence, Desmond and Rourke assisting us with their local knowledge. The hall of the Mechanics' Institute at Shandranaghan was hired for two nights, for the sum of *2l.* per night, payable beforehand. We chose a route, wrote letters, received answers, paid for assembly-rooms, and court-houses, and made every arrangement for our tour, suggested by our own discrimination, guide-books, O'Sullivan, and Rourke.

We had a most enjoyable ride from Dublin to Shandranaghan. With the exception of a priest and a lady, we were the only passengers left upon the platform.

The lady had a carriage waiting for her, the priest walked, and we hired a car for 'the hotel.' The station was a mile and a half from the town, and on the road I asked Rourke if the operatives—for Shandranaghan boasted a manufacture of its own—were the sort of people fond of amusement.

'Indeed,' he answered, 'and I don't know, but I don't see why not.'

A little further on we overtook a number of these aforesaid operatives, all busily engaged in pelting stones at a shabbily-dressed man who was running towards the town as if for life.





'Why are they pelting that poor fellow?' I asked.

'Indeed, and I don't know,' answered Bourke, unconcernedly; 'perhaps he's a souper.'

'A what?'

'A souper.'

'Yes, sir, he's that,' broke in the car-driver. 'It's Paddy Bryne, and he's a souper; the more shame for him, and comin' o' decent people!'

Jack and I were rather shocked; but we rallied when I said that I was glad I had hit upon the idea of charging only sixpence for the back seats in the Hall, as that small sum would doubtless meet the means of the working classes.

'It was my idea,' said Jack.

'No! mine.'

'My dear fellow——'

It was no use contending, so I gave it up.

The hotel was more a public-house than a hotel. The host, hostess, and servants were all civil, obliging, and evidently as unused to ablutions as to customers. The service was not divided into departments, but any servant answered your summons who might happen to be passing. Thus, your shaving-water would be brought in by the host himself. The barmaid would clean your boots, while the ostler officiated as barmaid. Arbitrary distinctions were unknown, and the various juvenile members of the landlord's family—children with uncombed heads and affectionate dispositions—wandered in and out, and played in the bedrooms with an absence of reserve that though touching was troublesome.

Our first care was to see Mr. Donnelly, the secretary of the Mechanics' Institute; the person to whom we had sent the money, and who had told us by letter that he thought that Shandranaghan was exactly the sort of town where a clever entertainment, well delivered, interspersed with good songs well sung, was likely to take. We were some time in finding Mr. Donnelly's residence, for Shandranaghan was an oddly-built town, in which the rows of houses left off here and there, and then began again in fresh and unexpected places. Another of its

peculiarities was, that it was all up-hill—there seemed to be no down hill—at least to Mr. Donnelly's. We had several times to ask our way, and were always directed with marked civility; sometimes, indeed, a man would retrace his steps to put us into the right road. We were evidently the objects of considerable curiosity, for everybody looked at us as if wondering why on earth we came there. We reached the Donnellian mansion as the sun was sinking behind a grand green hill, and the evening was purpling into night.

Mr. Donnelly was at home. Would we walk up into the drawing-room?

Jack and I put on our Pall-Mall manners. The drawing-room was very dark, but we saw that there were at least a dozen young ladies in it amply bemused. Mrs. Donnelly kept a finishing school.

Mr. Donnelly was glad to see us. Pray sit down. Mrs. Donnelly was glad to see us. The young ladies rose and repeated themselves as gracefully as a flock of birds lighting upon the earth. And again I felt we were objects of considerable curiosity—not to say solicitude.

Had Mr. Donnelly received our letter? Mr. Donnelly had received our letter with great pleasure. Had he seen the bills? He had seen the bills. They were capital bills, excellent bills, admirable bills. Mrs. Donnelly said they were admirable bills, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! sure,' in a chorus.

Did Mr. Donnelly and Mrs. Donnelly think, from the tone and temper of the inhabitants of Shandranaghan and its vicinity, that we should have a full attendance on the first night?

Mr. Donnelly's reply was cautious—not to say evasive. Mrs. Donnelly said that the inhabitants of Shandranaghan and its vicinity, had no taste, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! no.'

Whether it was Mr. Donnelly, or the setting sun, or the young ladies, or Shandranaghan and its vicinity, I know not; but I began to feel depressed: I and the setting sun felt a mutual sympathy. Mr. Donnelly promised to meet us and





show us the 'Hall' in the morning; and I asked Mrs. Donnelly if the young ladies would kindly favour us with their attendance—gratis of course. This liberal offer was not responded to with the cordiality I could have wished. The young ladies might be engaged in their studies, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! yes;' but they would be very much disappointed if they did not visit the Hall during our stay, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! sure,' indeed, they would not like to miss such an opportunity, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! no.'

Mr. Donnelly, Mrs. Donnelly, and their fair pupils all rose, resettled into their places, and we took our leave—every atom of our Pall-Mallian pretension vanished and gone. Out of the house it was quite dark, and we had to tumble back to the hotel cautiously, and precipitously.

In the morning, Mr. Donnelly—who by daylight was a meek man, with the appearance of a lecturer on the blessings of temperance, the correct thing for the secretary of a Mechanics' Institute—led us to 'the Hall,' both the exterior and interior of which disappointed us. There were two high stone walls, and a gate, which when shut would not open, and when open would not shut, which led to a court-yard, in which grew the tallest grass, and the finest and largest dock-leaves and dandelions I ever saw—which led to a building that looked like an old and insolvent national school. There was a portico to the principal entrance, which would have been more imposing had not all the stucco dropped from it. The door was of the same obstinate and unyielding character as the gate. Time, perseverance, and Mr. Donnelly, however, conquered, and we were admitted to the interior. There was a raised platform at one end, raised seats divided into two partitions, and a gallery. Words cannot do justice to the amount of dust which had settled everywhere, and the date at which the windows were last cleaned was evidently the same as the budding of the docks and dandelions outside. As Jack said,



the whole place looked 'in Chancery.'

Our first care was to see our 'posters' up. One Peter Connolly was recommended by Mr. Donnelly, and we again started to climb after him. After a considerable search, we discovered the hut, cabin, or wigwam of Peter, whom we found to be a weazened little old man, over sixty years of age, who had recently taken to his arms a third wife a trifle over sixteen. Doubtless he was the accredited and appointed bill-poster of Shandranaghan, by divine right or hereditary succession, for he could not read, he was not young, nor tall, nor active. Perhaps he had chosen that walk of life because his name was Peter. He required no instructions. When we told him what we wanted, he said—

'I know! I know! Put 'em up! I'll do it! I'll do it! I did it for Mister Callaghan, years ago. I'll get mee paste and mee pot—mee wife shall make it. Biddy!—Biddy!—"Crashavaramaunagharad abarahoon-di!—holerothernash!"' I quote Peter phonetically.

Rourke, our pianist, said that he was sure Peter was a Connaught man, and advised us to look after him. We accompanied Peter to the outskirts to see him stick up his first poster. He had procured a pint-pot full of something that looked like weak gruel, a camel's-hair brush, and we carefully laid over one of his thin old arms the slips printed 'MELODIES OF M' and over the other 'ANY LANDS THIS EVENING.'

Peter made his first essay on a dead wall green with moss, and virgin of advertisements. He pasted the back of the bill with his little brush, but finding that implement too small, began to smear the paste on with his fingers. Rourke rolled with laughter.

'See to him!—see to him!' he said.

Peter then raised the poster about four feet from the ground, and the 'MELODIES OF M' bloomed from the wall in green and yellow glory. We expected to see the other half of the poster stuck on to follow, when, to our intense surprise, Peter took up his can and trotted off.





'Hi!—Stop!' I cried, when Rourke interposed.

'See to him!—See to him!' he said.

We did see to him. Peter halted at a gate about a quarter of a mile from the wall which he had just adorned, and there with much trouble, paste, and care, stuck on the top bar the magic words 'ANY LANDS THIS EVENING.'

Rourke, Jack, and I roared with laughter, as we explained his mistake to him.

Crowds of the operatives turned out at noon and watched our proceedings with considerable interest. They all knew Peter, and gave him kind words of encouragement and advice. As he was posting away, a woman said—

'Ah, Pether, dear! but ye're makin' the gate look purty.'

And a man advised him, as he was endeavouring to placard a wall—

'Ye should stick it up hoigher, Pether,' he said, 'conspicuous to the sun!'

But Peter behaved with official reserve, and made no sign of hearing. We heard afterwards that the work-folk carefully stripped the posters while wet from the walls, and carried them to their cabins, where they stuck them up as pictures, and admired them as works of foreign art illustrative of some remarkable event—the opening of the Dublin Exhibition, or the passing of Repeal.

Rourke had enormous difficulty in procuring a piano. Mr. Donnelly regretted that Mrs. Donnelly could not spare hers, as it was required for the use of the young ladies who were finishing. Nor love nor money could hire one. At last we were advised to apply to Mr. de Winter, the only music and singing-master in the place, who, the paternal Donnelly informed us, *had* a piano—though whether he would lend it was a matter of extreme improbability. Mr. de Winter, in common with the rest of the population, lived up a hill. We rapped, and Mr. de Winter himself, in his shirt-sleeves, opened the door. We explained our errand, and Mr. de Winter, a grave and solemn man,

disappeared and then reappeared putting on his coat.

'We'll go and have some whisky,' he said, and he led us into a grocer's shop, containing no articles of grocery, but whisky, bottled beer, and candles.

'You never were in Shandranaghan before, were you?' he asked.

'No.'

'No!' he replied; 'I s'pose not. D'ye think of stay'n here?'

'Not more than the two nights.'

'Not more. No! I'd not advise more. Here's my—best wishes,' he said, mournfully. 'Shandranaghan is a quare spot!'

'Is it?' we said.

'Oh! and it's a quare spot.'

'People fond of music?' we inquired.

'Fond of music!' he repeated, 'fond of it! Would it be them? Oh! an' it's a quare spot; but ye're not stay'n long, an' it's wantin' the loan of a piano, you are?'

'Yes, and if you could oblige us—'

'If you've a piano and wouldn't mind—'

'We'll take the greatest care of it,' we all said together.

'Oh! I've a piano—and small blame to me—I teach the children. I've eleven of 'em—children, not pianos. What would you be wanting to give for the hire of it?'

We said that in England it was usual for the vendor of an article to set his price upon it; but when informed that it was the custom in Shandranaghan for purchasers to be the first to mention terms we succumbed, and proposed a guinea.

'A guinea!' he echoed, 'ah, yes, a guinea 'll do; and ye'll have to pay the men for fetchin' it, and for carryin' of it back. Pether 'll do that.'

We objected to Peter.

'He's strong is Pether, though he's little,' said Mr. de Winter, 'and he does all those sort o' things here—music—and—and bill-sticking—it's his perquisite—Ye'll take some more punch?'

We declined, but Mr. de Winter was obstinate, and we left the 'grocery' slightly elated; the mu-





sic-master wishing us luck, and telling us that Shandranaghan was a quare spot.

'Don't you think, Jack,' I said, 'that Mr. de Winter's manner and appearance are very like—'

'Vanderdecken! I catch the idea—quite so.'

The posters up, the bills distributed, the piano placed, tuned by Rourke, and the Hall dusted by Pether—another of his perquisites—and his bride, two days passed, during which we were regarded by all who saw us rather as Englishmen might be in Aleppo than in any portion of her Majesty's dominions. The eventful morning dawned on the evening of which we were to 'throw off.'

No places had been taken at the printer's. Mr. Donnelly told us that the aristocracy seldom came till the second night. We dined at four, as the landlord remarked, 'sumptuously,' took a cup of tea, and at five began to dress. Despite the heat, I threw on a grey overcoat. Jack, however, walked out in all the funeral solemnity of extreme evening Belgravia. We were shaved in true professional style—each sporting a moustache, smooth cheeks and chin.

I need not say the institute stood upon a hill. As we strode up it gently, the inhabitants flocked to their windows and doorsteps to look at us. Little boys ran after us, and workmen and peasants accompanied us. Such is fame!

'We shall have a rare full house,' said Jack, 'all these people are coming. It's wonderful how fond folks are of a private view of professional people, a'n't it?'

The words were hardly uttered when a woman appeared in sight. She was dusty, dishevelled, had been drinking, and evidently mistook us for a popular demonstration, a national pageant, or political procession!

'Oh,' she cried, 'the darlens! the beauties! oh, the pretty men! Is it themselves? Oh, look at 'em! Ohoo!'

'It's Judy!' said the lookers-on. Ah, Judy—go home.'

'I'll not; it's themselves that are

the dandy!' replied Judy. 'I'll have a kiss o' both, the darlens!'

'Ah! go away and don't bother, Judy; it's strangers the gentlemen are, see ye,' said a bystander.

'She's a poor dark innocent,' said another to us; 'it's best not to cross her, as she's the gurrl that can fight. Give her a kiss and let her go.'

Loth Jack and I saw that to refuse Miss or Mrs. Judy's demonstration of regard would be a proceeding fraught with danger. We therefore submitted to her salute in full sight of about a hundred persons, the market clock, which had only one hand, and that did not go, looking down upon us.

The ceremony over, Judy requested a penny with which to drink our health, and long life to it; and again we took the advice of disinterested bystanders and complied. The lady then removed the blockade, and we passed on, accompanied by the spectators, who by this time had mustered into a considerable crowd.

No sooner did we reach the open gate of the Hall than the foremost slank away, and the rest disappeared as if by magic.

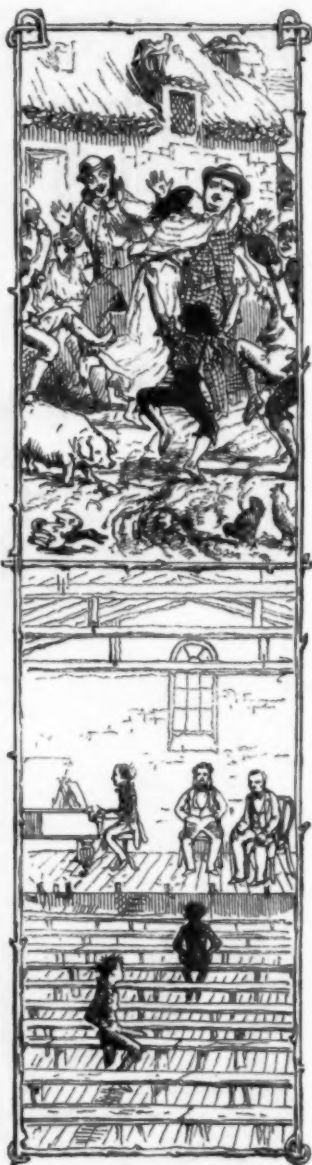
We found Mr. Donnelly in the courtyard, and could hear Rourke thundering away at Moore's Melodies in the Hall.

The doors were opened at half-past seven, of which fact not one solitary individual took the slightest notice. At eight the public of Shandranaghan remained in the same state of apathy.

'Is no one coming?' I asked.

Rourke laughed; and Mr. Donnelly tried to smile, and failed; then tried to look sympathetic and failed again.

At seven minutes past eight there was a rush of one. The eldest son of the landlord of the 'hotel,' to whom we had promised a free admission, claimed his privilege, and showed himself into the reserved seats, where he watched Rourke, who indulged him with variations from the Traviata for half an hour, after which the boy, thoroughly satisfied with the entertainment, went home. We continued to look on Mr. Donnelly, who, in his turn,





looked on the docks and dandelions, and when it was quite dark, sneaked back to the hotel. After supper, Mr. Donnelly was announced, and I thought was about to dilute his punch with tears, he was so moved at our failure, but he hoped for the best from the following night. For ourselves, the reaction from our annoyance came on us with full force, and we roared with laughter. Our ill-timed mirth drove Mr. Donnelly away, and we were just going to bed when Mr. de Winter showed his melancholy head at the door.

Mr. de Winter first inquired if we would take some whisky, and on our mentioning that we were in our own room, and could not permit him to pay for us, he reluctantly consented to make one glass of punch.

'It's a quare spot is Shandranaghan,' he said in his own mournful key. 'Ye didn't know it. 'Tis not the punch I came about, but the piano. Pether 'll bring it back. Ye've not played ye see, and so—'

And he laid our guinea on the table.

We protested—a bargain was a bargain, we were men of means, &c., but in vain; the music-master stuck to his point and carried it.

'Ye're young, ye're young,' he said, 'and Shandranaghan's a quare spot. I know what it is myself. I've eleven of 'em—all with a taste for music—more's the pity. Is it me take the guinea and you so young?'

It would have been a snobbish barbarity to refuse his kindness; and no sooner had we accepted it, than he changed from Vanderdecken to Mynheer von Dunk, and told stories and sang songs, the like of which were never heard save from the lips of an Irishman, or out of the pages of Sheridan, Moore, Lover, and Lever.

He kept us up till five o'clock. At nine we took a car, and steamed back to Dublin; we renounced the prospective profits of the rest of our route.

'We haven't quite cleared 200l., Jack,' I said on the deck of the boat that was shaking us to Holyhead.

'N—o,' he returned. 'I thought



that calculation of yours would turn out to be bosh.'

'Mine! why it was yours!'

'Mine! why you might as well say that the idea of giving an entertainment at all was mine!'

'So it was!'

'What!'

We quarrelled during the voyage, and travelled to London in separate carriages. However, we have made it up since and are as good friends as ever.

We never again tried that or any other entertainment. The manuscript of 'Melodies of Many Lands' I enclose with this. If on perusal it should be found suitable to the pages of—

T. W. R.



## AN APRIL FOOL.

AS Helen was the cause of Troy's destruction, so Miss Somerset was the cause of many heartburnings and much tribulation to our village. It may be necessary, for the proper understanding of this veritable history, that I should give a brief description of our village. The word is apt to give the idea of a collection of mean houses—to suggest humbleness and poverty. Ours is not a village of that sort. It is quite an aristocratic place, a suburban paradise of mansions standing in their own grounds, with great iron gates in front, and broad lawns behind, studded with ancestral trees. Almost every mansion has a coach-house and stable attached to it, and from one or two the family chariot rolls forth with a powdered coachman on the box, and two powdered footmen standing like statues of magnificence on stuffed pedestals behind. It is true there are some poor people in our village, but only just so many as are necessary for those acts of ministration which greatness, unhappily, cannot dispense with. We are obliged to tolerate a tinsmith, a saddler, a confectioner, a baker, a butcher, and one or two other people of that stamp; but, with these exceptions, the double line of mansions is unbroken by any edifice of less value than eighty pounds per annum. We are entirely an aristocratic community; and I trust you will not think the less of us when I confess that our patent of nobility is derived from that great Conqueror, Trade.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Somerset, I say, was the cause of much heartburn to this community; for, like Helen, she was beautiful. And that was wonderful too, for her father was very ugly, a coarse, heavy-looking man, of whom you would have guessed that he had originally dug ditches, or killed pigs, or sold beer to be drunk on the premises. Something of that kind, indeed, was whispered; but now he was a retired gentleman, living on a handsome fortune derived from railways. Miss Snapper did

say that he was a director of the company out of which he made his money, and that he made it by buying up any property which he thought might be wanted for an extension. But then, there were other persons who threw shoddy in the false teeth of Miss Snapper. No matter: Peter Somerset, Esquire, was the king of our village, and his daughter Julia was its belle. The lads began to run after her when she was barely sixteen; and no wonder. She was charming. At this age she was like a sylph. The most graceful form you ever saw. Tall for her years, her figure had yet all the development of maturity. She had the slimmest waist, the tiniest foot, and most delicate little hand that it is possible to conceive. She need not have shown her face at all to convince you of her beauty. The very sight of her back, as she sailed down the village, in her dainty, neatly-fitting garments, was enough to set all the bachelor-hearts beating like the clocks in a watchmaker's shop. Her face was so lovely, that every time you saw it you wondered if old Peter could really be her father. She was about as like him as Una is like the lion, in the picture; though, truth to say, there was more of the baboon than the lion about Peter. She had the most delicate complexion imaginable, which, as she became animated, mantled to the colour of the rose; a straight, finely-chiselled nose; large blue eyes, now sparkling with humour, now melting with tenderness; a mouth in the shape of Cupid's bow, with dimples on either side—not those silly dimples that we see in the middle of a red cheek, suggesting an apple that has had its stalk plucked out, but those that come and go with the humour, like a blush or a smile. Lips like the coral, teeth like the pearl, and locks like the ripe corn waving under the golden beams of the autumn sun. Bah! I can no more paint her picture than I can fly. Can you imagine her at all? Can you imagine *Ophelia* of a lively dis-

position, given to flirting, addicted to tapping Hamlet over the knuckles, with a pretty little rose-coloured parasol, and making eyes at Horatio, or Rosencrantz, or Guildenstern, or anybody else, just for the sake of exercising the artillery of her beauty? At seventeen, Miss Somerset had all the young men of our village at her feet; that is to say, she was surrounded and besieged by them wherever she went. When she drove out in the carriage, it was like a royal opening of Parliament; the young men lined the road to see her pass, and lifted their hats to her as if she had been a queen. At parties and balls they flocked round her and sought her for a partner, and fairly fought for the honour of taking her down to supper. Then they all wanted to sit next her; but, as only two could accomplish that, the others were obliged to be content with staring at her from a distance and talking to her across the table. Do you wonder that the matrons and maidens of the village did not like this? Miss Somerset was monopolizing all the eligible young men—literally, *all* of them. Imagine how painful it must have been to Jane and Emily and Edith, to have to sit at the supper-table beside unmarried gentlemen, who did not attend to them a bit, who did not talk to them, did not listen to them, forgot even to help them to tongue and chicken, being entirely absorbed, gazing at Miss Somerset, at the other end of the room. Imagine their feelings when Theodore and Adolphus got up from their side—which they were constantly in the habit of doing—and went over to pull a cracker with Miss Somerset. Conceive their heart wounds when they saw the eyes of Theodore and Adolphus glisten over the mottoes, and when they carefully put the tender sentences away in their pocket-books. Picture to yourself their contracted brows and quivering lips when the young men stood round her at the piano, like a body guard, all anxious to turn over the leaves of her music, all striving for the honour and glory of handing her to her seat. And, oh! the bitterness of standing at the

window and seeing her canter past on horseback, her figure looking more charming than ever in the neatly-fitting habit, and her golden hair flowing out beneath a coquettish little hat, while all the young men galloped after her like mad. The maidens were wounded to the heart's core. Many and many a night they went to bed and bedewed their pillows with bitter tears because of that flighty flaxen-haired doll. The mothers were simply furious. It was really too bad: quite a dog-in-the-manger proceeding! Miss Somerset would neither marry herself nor let others marry. This was the great offence. No one grudged her a husband; not at all,—only let her make her choice, and set the rest of the young men free to choose elsewhere.' This, however, Miss Somerset was in no hurry to do. She was most impartial in the distribution of her smiles and looks of encouragement, and the consequence was that all the young men held on, each one flattering himself that *he* would come in winner in the end. This state of things continued for two years, during which period not a single marriage of any consequence took place in the village, much to the displeasure and disgust, not only of the matrons and maidens, but also of the vicar, the vestry clerk, and Jobbins, the pastrycook. At length, however, the good news came that Miss Somerset was engaged. It was doubted at first, as being something much too good to be true; but Jobbins set the matter at rest by announcing that he had received orders for the wedding cake. It was now the turn of the young men to be injured. Miss Somerset had given her hand to none of the set that had so long flocked round her and paid her homage, but to a new comer in the neighbourhood, one Mr. Honiton, the son of a Manchester manufacturer, who, on the death of his father, had inherited considerable landed property, and set up as a squire. Four or five of the young men, when they heard from Miss Somerset's own lips that she had made her choice in this quarter, took to their beds and suffered for several days with severe

heart complaint. They accused Miss Somerset of being heartless and mercenary, for Mr. Honiton was a big, awkward, hulking fellow, who had nothing to recommend him but his money and his estate. But while the young men lay in bed and moaned and tore their hair, and cursed their fate, their mothers and

sisters sat in their parlours and drawing-rooms, and rejoiced maliciously, devoutly hoping that Mr. Honiton might lead his wife a miserable existence, and thus avenge them of all their injuries. Mr. Honiton was married to Miss Somerset, and the bells rang a merry peal, and the little boys ran after the carriages and



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shouted, and there was great joy everywhere, except in the breasts of certain young men, who felt that they had played the moth and fluttered about a candle, only to have their wings singed at last.

The marriage of Miss Somerset cleared the air. The blighted wall-flowers looked up, the young men

who at first thought their disease incurable, recovered wonderfully, and very shortly Emily gave her hand and heart to Theodore, and Edith consented to link her destiny with Adolphus. The matrimonial market had been thrown open and business became brisk. Miss Somerset, however, had spoilt the



AN ACADEMIC

From the Academy

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*Page 320.*

shouted, and there was great joy everywhere, except in the bosoms of certain young men, who felt that they had played the moth and flattered about a candle, only to have their wings singed at last.

The marriage of Miss Somerset cleared the air. The blighted willow-branches looked up, the young men

who at first thought their disease incurable, recovered wonderfully, and very shortly kindly gave her hand and heart to Theodore, and Edith consented to link her destiny with Adolphus. The matrimonial market had been thrown open and business became brisk. Miss Somerset, however, had spoilt the





AN APRIL FOOL.

Drawn by Adolphus Clarkson.



matrimonial prospects of a few, past all redemption. When the flaxen idol first drew votaries to her feet, Miss Jane Morley and Miss Margaret Thompson were of the ripe age of twenty-six; when Miss Somerset left the field and slipped the leash in which she had so long held all the eligible lads of the village tied and bound, those two ladies were twenty-eight; and it is wonderful how the female flower begins to languish and lose the freshness of its bloom on the approach of the thirties. Miss Somerset did Jane and Margaret an irreparable injury. Those two years of distraction tided them into old maid-hood. In other respects, however, the village recovered itself, and I have no doubt that we should all have lived happily ever afterwards, had it not been for an event which occurred about a year and a half after Miss Somerset's marriage. That event was the death of Mr. Honiton. In the short space of eighteen months the flaxen idol had become a widow. The village received the news with astonishment, amazement, and perhaps some slight satisfaction. 'Mrs. Honiton must expect grief and sorrow like other folks; she had had her share of gaiety and pleasure, goodness knows, and perhaps it would do her good.' This is what the old maids and the sourest of the matrons whispered to one another coming home from church after a sermon on Christian charity. But the village was not prepared for one startling consequence of Mr. Honiton's death. A few weeks after that melancholy event his widow—the idol—came back to live among us, and took up her abode at the house of her papa, who, it should be stated, had been in the mean time gathered to his plebeian fathers, leaving his house and property to his daughter. Mrs. Honiton did not show herself for some days after her arrival, and during this period of suspense the village speculated upon the ravages which grief had made upon her beauty, upon the tears which had dimmed the lustre of her eye, and the nights of watching which had blanched her cheek and clouded her fair brow. The

village—at least the female portion of it—was prepared for a walking monument of the profoundest sorrow, a widowed presentment of the true conventional type, with weeds hanging loosely about her figure, scorning all grace and showing neither shape nor make. Miss Jane Morley and Miss Margaret Thompson, who had taken refuge from the slights of the world in stern tea-meetings in connexion with clubs and a high persuasion, pictured her in a pair of flat-soled shoes, wearing a scanty black stuff gown, short, and without crinoline, and carrying on her head a coalscuttle swathed in crape.

It was a terrible shock to all these expectants when the widow made her first public appearance among them. Lady Godiva riding through the village in the original Coventry costume could not have caused a greater sensation. Mrs. Honiton was as beautiful, as radiant, as fashionably dressed and apparently as young as ever. It was evident that she had not been plunged into any violent grief; she had not cried her eyes out and spoiled her beauty; she had not been left destitute to give others the luxury of commiserating and helping her; and, worse than all, she wore so very natty and retiring a widow's cap, that you could scarcely detect that emblem of her bereavement. I don't exactly know what an invisible peruke is, but Mrs. Honiton's headgear was certainly an invisible widow's cap. It was considered quite scandalous that Mrs. Honiton should have got over her calamity so easily. In order, however, to acquit the lady of any charge of heartlessness which may be founded upon these facts, I may state that she gave her hand to Mr. Honiton at the stern command of her father, reserving her heart to herself, and that Mr. Honiton was little better than an idiot, a gentleman who spent nearly the whole of his time in the stable and the kennel, and who placed his wife in the scale of his affection after his horse, his dog, and his gun. Under these circumstances it would have been rank hypocrisy in Mrs. Honiton to show herself deeply grieved. But

what aggravated the female community most deeply was Mrs. Honiton's widow's cap. When she appeared in it for the first time in church she looked lovelier than ever. The merest suspicion of crimped white muslin peeping out between her black bonnet and her golden hair gave an additional piquancy to her beauty. And then her weeds were all so fashionably made and so elegantly worn that her figure really seemed to be improved by them. Her pink complexion stood out in charming contrast against her black crape bonnet; and this last-mentioned portion of her dress was a dainty cockle-shell article, so neat and natty that you might have imagined it to be a wedding bonnet dyed black. Her black bodice fitted to perfection, and the crape mantle which hung from her graceful shoulders was so contrived as to show that her waist was as slim as it had ever been. When she lifted up her crape flounces and exposed a tiny neatly-fitting kid boot with a graceful curve in the instep and military heels, Miss Nipper was heard to say that she had a great mind to go and slap her face. In fact, Mrs. Honiton in her widow's weeds was an infinitely more attractive person than she had ever been in all the dazzling splendour of white silk. Her first Sunday at church proved this most conclusively. The single young men never took their eyes off her, and indeed a good many of the married ones, including Theodore and Adolphus, could not help their glances straying in the direction of the beautiful relict.

Do you wonder that the women folks were indignant? They would have been more than women, more than mortal, if they had not. They had suffered already at the hands of this ensnaring siren; they had got rid of her, as they had fondly hoped, for ever, and here she was again troubling their waters as of yore. Her cap was assailed at once. It was a heartless mockery to put on a thing like that, and her husband only dead six weeks, and she ought to be ashamed of herself! But Mrs. Honiton did not appear at all ashamed

She paid close attention to the service, and said all the responses, and sang all the psalms, and with her calm pale face and placid eyes turned upwards, looked like an angel—at least that is what young Parkinson thought—Parkinson who had never closed either his eyes or his mouth since the fair vision first burst upon him at the very commencement of the service. I suspect there were not many young men in the church that Sunday, who, if they had been questioned, could have given a very satisfactory account of the sermon, or even been able to say what the text was. The eloquence of the preacher was no match for the more attractive metal of Mrs. Honiton's piquant beauty. If there had been a sermon in that fair face the single young men might have been better for coming to church that morning; as it was, they dispersed to talk of nothing else for the rest of the day but the young widow's golden hair, and blue eyes, and coral lips that looked so fascinating by contrast with the crape veil and the glimpse of white muslin. The maids and matrons were justified in being indignant. It was very wrong. The clergyman himself felt the rivalry, as he felt it on many a subsequent Sunday. But what could he do? He could not go and scold the widow for looking pretty, and it was no part of his duty as a divine to determine the fashion and proportions of a widow's cap. Miss Nipper, if she could have had her way, would have settled the matter by tearing it into shreds and stamping upon it; though, as was remarked by Miss Margaret Thompson, there was not much to stamp upon. The old state of affairs was re-established as thoroughly and completely as though Mr. Honiton had never been. Mrs. Honiton was not only more attractive than ever, but she had learned many artful and coquettish ways. She combined the privileges of the widow with the fascinations of the girl to that extent that it really seemed a positive happiness to be left a widow at that age with all those attractions. As a maiden, she would have had no licence to

practise the ensnaring arts which she now put in force in virtue of the fact that she had been married and lost her husband. I fancy that Mr. Weller's experience must have been among widows of this stamp—bouncing, fresh-faced widows at coaching houses, who set their caps—far back—at him, and regulated his liquor and generally superintended him. I don't wonder that the burden of his advice to his son was to beware of widows.

The female villagers witnessed with dismay their eligible young men once more falling down at the feet of the flaxen idol, following her wherever she went, sauntering behind her to admire her figure, walking on before to catch her smile, swarming round her at parties like flies round a sugar-cask, and from these out-door devotions returning to the smarting bosom of their families to rave of the bewitching widow. Had our village been ancient Athens, the widow's name would have been written on a shell; had it been Scotland in the sixteenth century the widow would have been burnt for a witch. It certainly was very provoking. She had spoilt the prospects of one generation, and now she was back again interfering with the prospects of another. A year or two makes a vast difference when the age of a boy or girl is verging towards the close of the teens. Fifteen a girl, sixteen a woman; twenty a boy, twenty-one a man. So in the course of two years schoolgirls had become women, schoolboys had become men. The 'idol' had come back to catch both in her net. Such are the privileges of being a widow, young, of course providing that you are pretty into the bargain. Sex makes all the difference. Widowers are not popular, however handsome they may be. You never see girls running after a bereaved male, unless, indeed, they are old girls, who are beginning to despair. Then, of course, as drowning men catch at straws, so aging maids, when they see the torch of Hymen flickering, will clutch at any hand that is held out to them.

Such was the state of affairs when

Mr. Charles Bevington came to reside in our village. Mr. Charles Bevington was a rising young barrister—a handsome, dashing fellow, with black whiskers, and an easy, nonchalant address. Physically he was a sort of prize man, a specimen of humanity who would have carried off the gold medal at an exhibition of his species. He had a broad forehead and a broad chest; his frame was muscular and strongly knit; his hair curled all over his well-set head; and his eyes beamed with vigour and vivacity. With all this he had a ready tongue, a wonderful faculty for talking rattling nonsense; and he was a bachelor. He was the sort of person who, as soon as he is seen, provokes the emphatic commentary, 'What a handsome man!' His good looks were so strongly developed, and, as a whole, so complete and undeniable, that even married ladies, in the presence of their husbands, could not restrain their admiration; and husbands could hear their remarks with complacency, for it was a startling fact which nobody could deny. It was as natural to say that Mr. Charles Bevington was handsome, as it would have been to say that a man seven feet high was tall. Like all the others, Mr. Bevington became attracted by the beauty of the young widow, and very shortly after his arrival in the village he came to me raving about her.

'I wish you would marry her,' I said.

Mr. Bevington was startled at my coming down upon him plump at the first word with the expression of such a wish as this.

'Why—how—what do you mean?' he stammered out.

'I mean exactly what I say,' I repeated. 'I wish you would marry Mrs. Honiton, for thereby you would do the village a signal service.'

'I should have thought quite the contrary,' he replied, 'for all the young fellows are mad after her.'

'That's the mischief,' I said.

'Mischief! I really don't understand you.'

'Why, the fact is, Mrs. Honiton monopolizes the attentions of all the

young men, and the other young ladies in the village have nobody to make love to them. If Mrs. Honiton were married, five or six eligible parties would be let loose from her tail to go and court elsewhere. Our damsels are languishing for beaux, and all on account of this bewitching widow.'

'Well,' he said, 'I don't wonder at that.'

'No,' I said, 'but the young ladies wonder at it, and, what's more, they don't like it; and if you'll only go and marry Mrs. Honiton out of the way, I'm sure they'll subscribe for a testimonial to you.'

'Are you really serious?' he said.

'Perfectly so,' I replied; 'in fact, I would marry her myself out of pity for the poor girls, only for the trifling obstacle of which you are aware, that I am married already.'

'Has she money?' he asked.

'Lots,' I replied.

'Then,' he said, 'there is no need to ask more questions, for I don't require you or any one else to tell me that she is as beautiful as an angel. By Jove! I'll take your advice, and stick up to her.'

'Do,' I said; 'and if you only win the widow's heart, you will at the same time win the hearts of all the unmarried ladies of the village. Maidens and matrons will all be ready to praise you.'

'In that case,' he said, 'I shall step into a perfect mine of affection. Well, I'll go in for it at any rate.'

'Yes,' I said, 'do; go in and win.'

Mr. Bevington did go in for it. He laid siege to the widow immediately, much to the indignation and disgust of her train of admirers, who looked upon the encroachment of the tall, handsome barrister as something entirely disproportionate and unfair. When Mr. Bevington dashed into the midst of them, and carried the widow off in triumph, his rivals fell off timidly, and looked up at him as much as to say, 'Why don't you compete with one of your own size?' The widow, however, was by no means inclined to encourage a monopoly of herself, and still continued to distribute her smiles

with impartiality. The consequence was, that her many admirers held on for some time, and did their best to dispute the ground with the handsome barrister; but it was very discouraging work. The barrister almost invariably got the best of it, and on such occasions the widow would look at her train, and shrug her pretty shoulders, as much as to say, 'It is really not my fault. I try to give you all a chance; and if you let this dashing, black-whiskered man cut you out, why, you have only yourselves to blame.'

Mrs. Honiton's followers began to drop off one by one, and the female villagers looked up. Mr. Webber, the cotton-broker, was the first to relax his hold, and sink into the waters of despair; then Captain Jarvis; then young Jenkins, the alderman's son, and two or three more, until the prize was disputed by only two—Mr. Bevington, the handsome barrister, and Mr. Joseph Perkins, a mild little gentleman, whose sticking up to Mrs. Honiton had always been regarded as like his impudence. As some half-dozen of Mrs. Honiton's admirers had now been detached for other service, the village was in a humour to be amused at the pretensions of 'little Perkins,' particularly as little Perkins had only four hundred a year, and was short, and by no means what the ladies call handsome. Little Perkins had another fault—or, at least, he exhibited certain traits of character which are a positive disadvantage when placed in competition with physical beauty and dash. Perkins was amiable, gentle, and unobtrusive in his manners, kind and generous of disposition, and, on all occasions, highly considerate of the feelings of others. And because he was all this, and wasn't six feet high, and hadn't black whiskers, and didn't bounce and talk loud, the girls called him a 'molly.' It is the same in the matrimonial market as in the shop or the bazaar. It is the showy article that takes. Women see a gaudy man, all dazzle and bright colour, and they say at once, 'I'll take this article, please,' without even stopping to inquire if he will



wash, if he will wear, and if his colours are fast. I believe that if it were the custom for women to propose, and if they were left to make their choice, they would all throw the handkerchief to the long-legged, black-whiskered, handsome fellows, perfectly irrespective of brains or character. Scholars, philosophers, and men of thought and mind would not get wives at all.

So the village laughed at the pretensions of little Mr. Perkins, and of course Mr. Bevington was in every respect *above* seriously regarding so insignificant a person as a rival. He treated him as a big mastiff treats a little puppy dog. He did not exhibit any impatience when Mr. Perkins joined the society of himself and the widow, but rather took delight in drawing him out and encouraging him to go on. Mr. Bevington, in fact, was amused with the little man, and liked to 'trot him out,' as he expressed it before the widow. And the widow seemed to enjoy the fun, and was for ever sending Perkins to fetch and carry for her. If, when she was sitting by the side of the dashing Mr. Bevington, she happened to drop her handkerchief, she would call to little Perkins to pick it up for her, and Bevington would quietly keep his seat and allow Perkins to perform the office. Everybody pitied little Perkins and wondered that he could be such a fool.

But Mr. Bevington was suddenly called away on business, and Mr. Perkins had the field all to himself. He seized the opportunity to make an offer to the widow. He fell upon his knees, vowed that he loved her to distraction, and swore that he could never be happy without her. Mrs. Honiton rejected him, and actually laughed at him. Poor little Perkins went home and took to his bed, and was ill for weeks.

In the mean time the handsome barrister returned, and hearing of Perkins's declaration, was immensely amused, and told the story everywhere with great gusto and delight.

One day, shortly after this, Bevington called upon me with an invitation to an evening party at Mrs. Honiton's house.

'Well,' I said, 'I presume you have done it: gone in and won, as I advised you.'

'Well,' he said, 'I think I may safely say I have.'

'And it's all settled,' I said.

'Well, not exactly,' he said; 'she has some scruples about giving her consent so soon after her—her bereavement, which is quite right and proper, you know, and I like her the better for it; but it's all right.'

'Ah! doesn't like the idea of serving up the funeral baked meats at the wedding tables,' I remarked.

'Precisely, and wants to wear out the black shoes; but you'll come to the party, won't you? I want you to be there particularly, for we are going to have a lark with little Perkins.'

'What!' I said, 'will he be there after what has occurred?'

'There's the lark,' he said; 'observe the date of the party, the first of April; we're going to make an April fool of him.'

I asked how they intended to proceed. He explained:

'Oh! the simplest thing in the world,' he said. 'I have written a letter to Perkins, as if from Mrs. Honiton, inviting him to the party and giving him to believe that she relents towards him and is anxious that he should renew his addresses.'

'Does Mrs. Honiton know of it?' I asked.

'Oh, yes; of course she does, and enters into the joke with an anticipation of rare fun. What a lark it will be to see little Perkins hoaxed!'

'It will indeed,' I said, 'and I shall certainly be there to see.'

I went to the party on the first of April, and arriving rather early, found Mr. Bevington and the widow concocting an elaboration of the plot for making an April fool of Perkins. It was arranged that Mrs. Honiton should give Perkins great encouragement, and lead him to a second declaration, and that the guests should all come in at the moment, and discover him on his knees at her feet. I thought this going rather too far, and was somewhat surprised that Mrs. Honiton should be so eager to join in so heartless a plot; but as all the guests who were in the secret

looked upon it as a great piece of fun, I said nothing, and let matters proceed.

Perkins arrived, was announced, and entered the drawing-room in a faultless evening suit, evidently ordered for the occasion. He went straight to Mrs. Honiton, shook her warily by the hand, and looked his happiness and his thanks with an expression of honest earnestness, which made me feel ashamed of myself for having, in the remotest way, entered into the conspiracy against him. I could not have imagined Mrs. Honiton to be so consummate an actress. She returned his warm grasp in the most impressive manner, and put on an expression of delight and pleasure which it would have been impossible to suspect. Bevington was holding on by the mantelpiece, convulsed with suppressed laughter. Mrs. Honiton saw him and frowned gravely, sustaining her part to perfection. When Bevington had managed to control his laughter, he went up to Perkins and whispered words of encouragement in his ear; and all the evening he followed him about, muttering such things as 'Faint heart never won a fair lady,' 'Fortune favours the brave,' 'Go in and win,' 'She loves you, Perkins.'

The moment came. It was after supper, and after the first quadrille. Mrs. Honiton, who had been Perkins's partner, led him away out of the drawing-room into an adjoining apartment. Bevington gave the initiated the signal, and we followed. Mr. Perkins and Mrs. Honiton were walking up and down the room, arm-in-arm, talking softly. Every now and then we could hear Perkins making mention of his 'heart,' his 'devotion,' his 'long attachment,' his 'unalterable devotion.' Mrs. Honiton was silent, and looked down modestly, with admirable art. Perkins handed her to a chair. He sat down beside her; he whispered more words of love—he fell upon his knees at her feet!

'Now is the time,' cried Bevington, and he rushed into the room, and burst into a roar of laughter. Perkins rose in haste and confusion. Mrs. Honiton rose also, but looked

calm and serious. She turned coldly to Bevington, and said:

'Pray, what are you laughing at, sir?'

'Capital! capital!' cried Bevington; 'how admirably she acts her part!'

'Mr. Bevington,' said Mrs. Honiton, in the same cold, earnest manner, 'the part I am acting is one in which I am prompted by my heart and my inclination, and not by your cruel and unmanly designs. Mr. Perkins has made me an offer of his hand, and I accept it, confident that he also bestows upon me a heart capable of love, capable of feeling, and capable of kindness and generosity.'

Mr. Bevington was still trying to laugh, but it was a little on the wrong side of his mouth now. Mrs. Honiton's acting was too deep, too subtle, too profound for him. She continued:

'You must remember, Mr. Bevington, that I am a widow, and that I have been privileged, while very young, to acquire experience of your sex. That experience has not come too late for my happiness. I have thought it possible, sir, that a person who has acted with such deliberate and wanton cruelty towards the most kindhearted and inoffensive of men, might at some future time feel no scruple in practising that cruelty upon a defenceless woman; and I have thought it most probable that a man who has invariably, and under many trying circumstances, shown himself to possess all the qualities which make up the character of a true gentleman, will prove himself to be a kind and devoted husband. Sir, I have made my choice.'

And Mrs. Honiton gave her hand to Perkins, led him into the ball-room among the company, and there openly announced to her guests that she had made choice of a husband.

And so Mr. Perkins, instead of being made an April fool, was made the happiest man alive. And the village wondered, and refused to believe its eyes, until it saw Mr. and Mrs. Perkins roll away in the bridal chariot.

A. H.

## A BUNDLE OF CONTRADICTIONS.

TRUE TO A TITTLE.

**I** AM long, I am short, I am thin, I am stout;  
 I am often within, even when I'm without;  
 I am dark, I am fair, I am old, I am new;  
 On my face may be smiles, even while I look blue.  
 I've a foot without toes, and a head without hair;  
 I am light, I am heavy, and 'tis true, I declare,  
 Wherever I'm sent, without limbs I go there.  
 Without wings I can fly, going up to the skies,  
 Without voice I can tell all the traveller espies;  
 And this I accomplish, although without eyes.  
 Although I hear nothing, because without ears,  
 The lover confides me his hopes and his fears.  
 Without hand I can work, for you'll own it is true,  
 From that which I bear many blessings ensue,  
 Yet, though without malice, much mischief I do.  
 Though void of all feeling, of me you may borrow  
 What will move you to laughter, or melt you in sorrow;  
 Though I never could think, much reflection I show,  
 And I wisdom impart, although nothing I know.  
 Although I'm worth millions, contradiction complete,  
 Men trample me down in the dirt with their feet.  
 Nay, these wonders to crown, it with truth can be said,  
 Though some thousand years old, I remain to be made!

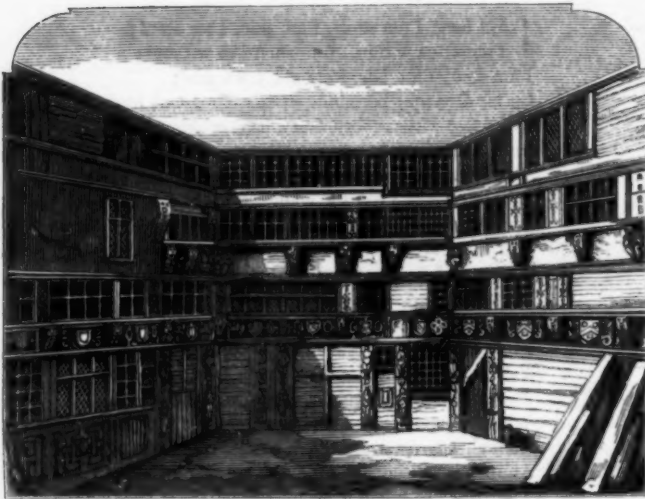
C. M.



## THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

## CHAPTER III.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON OF LONDON.



WHITTINGTON'S HOUSE (LOOKING FROM THE COURT), MARK STREET, CRUCHED FRIARS.  
[From an Old Print.]

EVERYBODY knows the story of Dick Whittington and his Cat;—how the little fellow, at the age of seven, ran away from a home where there was nothing to make him happy, was a beggar-boy for some years, and then, hearing that the streets of London were paved with gold and silver, worked his way thither to be saved from starvation by the good-nature of a merchant of Leadenhall Street, named Fitzwarren;—how he was for a long time scullion in the merchant's house, much favoured by Mistress Alice, the merchant's daughter, but much persecuted by the 'vile jade of a cook,' whose bidding he had to follow;—how at length his master, sending a shipfull of merchandize to Barbary, permitted each one of his servants to venture something, and poor Whittington had nothing to venture save

a cat which he had bought for a penny, and set to destroy the rats and mice that infested his garret;—how, while the ship was on its voyage, the cook-maid's tyranny so troubled him that he ran away, and had gone as far as Bunhill Fields, when the bells of Bow Church seemed to call to him—

'Turn again, Whittington,  
Thrice Lord Mayor of London;'

and how, when, in obedience to this warning, he went back to Leadenhall Street, it was to learn that his cat had been bought by the King of Barbary for treasures worth 100,000*l.*; so that he was all at once almost the richest commoner in England, fit to marry good Mistress Alice, his patron's daughter, to become a famous merchant and, as Bow bells had promised, thrice









SIR RICHARD WHITTINGTON.

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY REGINALD ELSTREE, circa A.D. 1500.



Lord Mayor of London, and to live in the City's history as one of its greatest benefactors. But that tale is too full of anachronisms and improbabilities for any part of it, not confirmed by authentic records, to be believed in; and the authentic records are so few that we can get but a slight knowledge of Whittington's real history.

That a cat had something to do with the making of his fortune is not easily to be denied. The legend is traced back to within a generation of his lifetime, and to authorities that could hardly have been either ignorant or untruthful. It is probable, moreover, that he owed something to the influence and assistance of Fitzwarren, whose daughter he did really marry. But that he began life as a beggar-boy and scullion is certainly a fable. He was the youngest son of Sir William Whittington, a descendant of an ancient Warwickshire family, and proprietor of the manors of Pauntley, in Gloucestershire, and Solers Hope, in Hereford, who died in 1360. The family possessions passed to William, the firstborn, and, on his early death, to Robert, the second son, High Sheriff of Gloucester in 1402, and again in 1407, and ancestor of the Whittingtons of Hamswell, existing to this day. This Robert must have been a wealthy man. On one occasion he was riding with his son Guy in the neighbourhood of Hereford, when about thirty followers of one Richard Oldcastle, who had doubtless been aggrieved at some of the High Sheriff's proceedings, waylaid and took them prisoners, only to be released on their entering into a bond to pay 600*l.* by way of ransom, and to take no proceedings against Oldcastle for his lawless conduct. In 1416, however, Robert Whittington obtained authority from Parliament to consider this forced engagement as null and void; and it is likely that he got back his money and procured the punishment of his enemy.

Richard Whittington seems to have been only a few years old at the time of his father's death; and he was not yet a man in 1373, when he lost his mother. Being a

younger son, he followed the common practice of younger sons in times when there were few other professions to choose from, and became a merchant. Of his early life nothing is recorded. We first hear of him in the year 1393, when he must have been nearly forty; but as he was then a member of the Mercers' Company, and alderman and sheriff of the City of London, we have good ground for assuming that he had been a prosperous merchant during many previous years. Perhaps, as the story-books assert, he ran away to London, and then became rich through the accidental value of his cat; but in that case the wealth thus derived can only have been a trifling sum, to be used well and greatly augmented by his own industry. It is more probable, however—and we do him the greater honour in making this assumption—that he rose solely through his own talent and application. He must have had some slight patrimony of his own, and much more must have come to him by his marriage with Alice, the daughter of Sir Hugh Fitzwarren of Torrington, owner of much property in Devonshire, Gloucestershire, and other counties. We have no solid ground for supposing that Fitzwarren himself ever meddled with trade, but his influence would be of use to young Whittington at his beginning of commercial life. That the beginning was comparatively humble may be inferred from the fact that the lad took to mercery instead of engaging in the wholesale wool or wine trades that were followed in the different ports by such men as the De la Poles of Hull. 'The mercers, as a metropolitan guild,' we are told, 'may be traced back to A.D. 1172; but it was not until the fifteenth century that they took their station among the merchants, and from being mere retailers became the first City company. Towards the close of the fourteenth century the mercers monopolized the silk trade, woollen stuffs having, prior to that period, constituted their staple business, and up to which time they had only partially been incorporated.' Whit-

tington, in his younger days, had to stand at the door of Westminster Hall, or in Cheapside, or Cornhill, offering coats, caps, and other articles of haberdashery, &c., to passers by, just as, a generation later, old Dan Lidgate's hero, London Lackpenny, found the tradesmen doing when he came to try his luck in London. He went first to Westminster, but there, instead of getting any help, he was pushed about and robbed of his hood.

'Within this hall neither rich nor yet poor  
Would do for me aught, although I should die;  
Which ruling, I gat me out of the door,  
Where Fleming's began on me for to cry,  
"Master, what will ye open or buy?  
Fine felt hats? or spectacles to read?  
Lay down your silver, and here you may speed."

'Then into London I did me hie,—  
Of all the land it beareth the prize.  
"Hot peascods!" one began to cry;  
"Strawberry ripe, and cherries in the rise!"  
One bade me come near and buy some spice.  
Pepper and saffron they gan me bede,  
But for lack of money I might not speed,

'Then to the Cheap I gan me drawn,  
Where there much people I saw for to stand.  
One offered me velvet, silk, and lawn;  
Another he taketh me by the hand,  
"Here is Paris thread, the finest in the land!"  
I never was used to such things indeed;  
And wanting money, I might not speed.

'Then went I forth by London Stone,  
And throughout all Candlewick Street;  
Drapers much cloth me offered anon.  
"Then comes me one crying, "Hot sheep's feet!"  
One cried "Mackerel!"—"Oyster green!"  
another gan me greet.

One bade me buy a hood to cover my head;  
But for want of money I might not be sped.

'Then into Cornhill anon I rode,  
Where there was much stolen gear among.  
I saw where hung mine own hood,  
That I had lost among the throng.  
To buy my own hood I thought it wrong.  
I knew it as well as I did my creed,  
But for lack of money I could not speed.

'Then hied I me to Billingsgate;  
And one cried, "Ho! now go we hence;"  
I prayed a bargeman, for God's sake,  
That he would spare me my expense.  
"Thou guest not here," quoth he, "under  
two pence;  
I list not yet bestow any alma's deed."  
Thus lacking money I could not speed.'

In that busy, money-making little world of London Whittington grew rich and influential. By 1393 he was a master mercer, with five apprentices under him, and in the same year, if not before, he was

an alderman living at the house in Mark Lane, which we have pictured from a sketch taken before it was pulled down. On the 21st of September in this year, moreover, he was elected sheriff; and in 1397 a writ was issued in the name of Richard II. appointing him to act as mayor and escheator in the place of Adam Banne, 'who had gone the way of all flesh.' In the following year he was elected mayor—the title Lord Mayor seems not to have been introduced till a later period—in his own right; and he held the office again in 1406, and again in 1419, on which last occasion the Mercers' Company 'attended the cavalcade with eight new banners, eight trumpeters, four pipers, and seven nakers,' nakers being wind instruments of some sort now forgotten, 'that in the battle,' according to Chaucer, 'blowen bloody sounds.'

The mercers of London had good reason to be proud of their representative. Just at this time, as we have seen, their calling was gaining much fresh dignity; and it cannot be doubted that Whittington's zeal and influence greatly conduced to this. In 1400 we find his name among the list of great merchants and others excused from attendance upon Henry IV. in his Scottish wars; and henceforth he seems to have been a special favourite with the king. In 1402 he received 21*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* for ten cloths of gold and other merchandize provided for the marriage of Blanche, Henry's eldest daughter, with the King of the Romans; and in 1406 he furnished pearls and cloth of gold worth 248*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*, to be used at the wedding of the king's other daughter, Philippa. In the same year he lent 1,000*l.* to King Henry on the security of the subsidies on wool, hides, and woofels, a transaction exactly similar to the many in which we saw Sir William de la Pole engaged two generations earlier. Two other London merchants, John Norbury and John Hende, appear at this time to have been richer even than Whittington, as on this occasion they each lent 2,000*l.* to the king. Hende was Mayor of

London in 1391, and again in 1404, and his name is several times met with in conjunction with Whittington's. The king's debts were paid in 1410, and in 1411 we find that Whittington was employed to pay 100 marks for expenses incurred on account of the coming of French ambassadors to Dover, and their conveyance thence to the king's presence at Gloucester. In 1413 he lent another sum of 1,000*l.* to Henry IV., the money being returned in a fortnight; and it is certain that he often rendered similar service both to this monarch and to his son. For maintaining the siege of Harfleur in 1415 he lent 700*l.* to Henry V., to be repaid out of the customs on wool collected in London, Boston, and Hull; and another loan of 2,000 marks made in 1416 was discharged two years later. There is a tradition, hardly to be credited, that Whittington incurred much greater obligations on Henry's account, and volunteered an acquittance in the most chivalrous way possible. During his last mayoralty, in 1419, we are told, he invited the king and queen to a sumptuous entertainment at Guildhall, on the occasion of his receiving knighthood; and among the rarities prepared to give splendour to the festival was a marvellous fire of precious and sweet-smelling woods, mixed with cinnamon and other costly spices. While the king was praising the novelty, Whittington went to a closet and drew thence bonds to the extent of 60,000*l.*, which during the French wars had been issued by the sovereign, and which he had diligently bought up from the various merchants and money-lenders to whom they had been given; and this whole bundle he threw into the flames as the most expensive fuel of all. 'Never had prince such a subject!' Henry exclaimed, as soon as he understood the generosity of the act. 'And never had subject such a prince!' answered Whittington.

That story may or may not be true. But of other, wiser and more honourable acts of liberality done by Whittington we have ample proof. 'The fervent desire and busy intention of

a prudent, wise, and devout man,' he is reported to have said not long before his death, 'shall be to cast before and make sure the state and the end of this short life with deeds of mercy and pity, and specially to provide for those miserable persons whom the penury of poverty insulteth, and to whom the power of seeking the necessities of life by art or bodily labour is interdicted.' And this was certainly the rule of his own life. In the year 1400 he obtained leave to rebuild the Church of St. Michael Paternoster, and found there a college, 'consisting of four fellows, clerks, conducts, and choristers, who were governed by a master, on whom he bestowed the rights and profits of the church, in addition to his salary of ten marks. To the chaplains he gave eleven marks each, to the first clerk eight, to the second clerk seven and a half, and to the choristers five marks a year each.' Besides this he built the chapel annexed to Guildhall, made contributions to the adornment of Gloucester Cathedral, and endowed many other churches. Four hundred years before John Howard appeared as the prisoner's friend Whittington began to rebuild Newgate Prison, hitherto 'a most ugly and loathsome prison, so contagious of air that it caused the death of many men;' and, dying before the work was done, he left money that it might be duly completed. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in Smithfield, was also repaired by his instructions; and Whittington's Almshouses, near Highgate, are to this day standing monuments of the generosity of this 'worthy and notable merchant, the which,' according to the testimony of his executors, 'while he lived, had right liberal and large hands to the needy and poor people.' In other ways he cared for the neediest among his fellow-men. 'One of the last acts of his life,' says a manuscript authority, 'indicating his honesty and public spirit, was his active prosecution of the London brewers for forestalling meat and selling dear ale; for which interference with their proceedings the brewers were very wroth.' And as a small

but significant illustration of his large-hearted charity, Stow tells us that 'there was a water conduit east of the Church of St. Giles, Cripple-gate, which came from Highbury, and that Whittington, the mayor, caused a bosse [or tap] of water to be made in the church-wall,'—the forerunner, by nearly half a millennium, of the drinking-fountains now so common among us.

Notable evidence of Whittington's ability in a province not much heeded by the majority of merchants, appears in the fact that Henry V., in 1413, a few months after his accession, appointed him chief supervisor of the rebuilding of the nave in Westminster Abbey. Two years later, moreover, in ordering certain alterations in the City of London, the king thought it well to direct that the mayor should do nothing either in building up or in pulling down without the advice of Whittington. But the merchant did more for the City than even King Henry could have expected. In his will he provided for the paving and glazing of Guildhall, luxuries at that time almost confined to palaces; and during the last years of his life he was busy about the foundation of the library of the Grey-friars monastery in Newgate Street. 'This noble building,' according to Stow, 'was 129 feet long, 31 feet in breadth, entirely ceiled with wainscot, with 28 wainscot desks, and 8 double settees. The cost of furnishing it with books was 55*l.* 10*s.*, of which 40*l.* was subscribed by Whittington.' Still more important than this was the Guildhall Library, built by Whittington's directions, for the preservation of the civic records. The most important of these, the '*Liber Albus*,' printed for the first time a few years ago under the editorship of Mr. Riley, is thought to have been compiled, at Whittington's own suggestion, by his chief executor, John Carpenter.

Whittington died in 1413. 'His body was *three* times buried in his own church of St. Michael Pater-noster—first by his executors under a fair monument; then in the reign of Edward VI., the parson of the

church thinking some great riches, as he said, to be buried with him, caused his monument to be broken, his body to be spoil of its leaden sheet, and again the second time to be buried; and in the reign of Queen Mary the parishioners were forced to take him up and lap him in lead as before, to bury him the third time, and to place his monument, or the like, over him again.' But both church and tombstone were destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666; and now his only monument is to be found in the records of the city which he so greatly helped by his noble charities, and, as far as we can judge, by his perfect showing of the way in which a merchant prince should live.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE CANNINGS OF BRISTOL.

From very early times Bristol was one of the foremost marts of English commerce. In the twelfth century, according to William of Malmesbury, 'its haven was a receptacle for ships coming from Ireland, Norway, and other foreign lands, lest a region so blest with native riches should be deprived of the benefits of foreign merchandize;' and in later generations there was no diminution of the old seafaring zeal. 'Considering the many and notable services,' runs a charter granted by Henry IV. soon after the year 1400, 'which very many merchants, burgesses of our town of Bristol, have done for us and our famous progenitors in many ways with their ships and voyages, at their own great charges and expense, and also since many of the said burgesses and merchants have been grievously vexed and disturbed by the lieutenants and ministers of our Admiralty of England, to their great loss and burthen, we therefore of our own special grace have granted for us and our heirs to the mayor and commonalty and their heirs, that the said town shall be for ever free from the jurisdiction of the said Admiralty.'

But for a long time Bristol commerce ran in the old groove, with-



out receiving much influence from the cloth trade introduced in the twelfth century from Flanders. Hull, Boston, and other towns on the eastern coast of England, with Winchester, Totnes, and others in the south, had been growing rich through some generations by means of commerce in wool and cloth before Thomas Blanket, a merchant of Bristol, and some of his friends were in 1340 fined by the civic authorities 'for having caused various machines for weaving and making woollen cloths to be set up in their own houses, and having hired weavers and other workmen for this purpose.' The fine was remitted, however, by Edward III., and the Bristol people, seeing the value of the innovation, soon learnt to honour its introducers. In 1342 Blanket was made bailiff of Bristol, and in 1356 he, with some of his fellow-merchants, was summoned to Westminster to advise with the king on matters of importance in the interests of trade. From this time cloth played an important part in the commerce of Bristol. It provided a principal occupation both for the home manufacturers and for the traders with foreign countries until the discovery of America opened up new and yet more abundant sources of wealth.

The greatest name in Bristol history prior to the beginning of that American traffic is first met with in the lifetime of Blanket, the cloth-weaver and cloth-dealer. William Canning, or Canynge, the elder, was a man of mark and a famous merchant during the second half of the fourteenth century; but nearly all we know of him is summed up in a string of dates. In 1361, and again in 1369, he was elected to the office of bailiff of Bristol; he was six times mayor—in 1372, 1373, 1375, 1381, 1385, and 1389; and thrice—in 1364, in 1383, and in 1384—he represented the city in Parliament. He died in 1396, leaving a large amount of money to be divided between his children, and much more to be distributed in charity. His son John was also a merchant of repute. A ship belonging to him, trading to Calais and

Flanders, was seized by some jealous seamen of the North in 1379, and detained at Hartlepool until the culprits had been brought to justice and restitution obtained. He also went the round of civic honours, being bailiff in 1380, sheriff in 1382, member of Parliament in 1384, and mayor in 1392 and 1398. He died in 1405, leaving a third of his goods to his wife, a third to his children, and a third to the poor. His eldest son Thomas settled in London as a grocer, and prospered well enough to become in due time master of his company and Lord Mayor of London; but in fame and wealth he was far outdone by his more famous brother.

This brother, known as William Canning the younger, to distinguish him from his grandfather, was born in 1399 or 1400. Of him, as of the other members of his family, very little indeed is recorded. That he was the greatest of Bristol's old merchant princes, however, is abundantly shown. He was about twenty-five when, as we are told in the contemporary 'Label of English Policy,' the men of Bristol first, 'by rudder and stone,' went to Iceland,

'As men were wont of old  
Of Scarborough, unto the castle cold;

and it is pretty certain that he himself was one of the earliest and most energetic of the men who transferred the fish trade to Bristol.

Bristol was not long allowed without hindrance to enjoy this source of wealth. The shortsighted policy of the Danish Government, submitted to by the weak and mischievous counsellors of Henry VI., led to a treaty by which the merchants of London, Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincoln, York, Hull, Newcastle, and Bristol, were forbidden to trade to Iceland, Finmark, and other districts subject to the King of Denmark; and in 1450 the treaty was confirmed. To the rule, however, there was made in the latter year one notable exception. The Danish monarch allowed William Canning, 'in consideration of the great debt due to the said merchant from his subjects of Iceland and Finmark, to lade

certain English ships with merchandise for those prohibited places, and there to take fish and other goods in return.' And Canning's ships were about the largest hitherto known in England. Under date 1460, we read that during eight years he employed on an average eight hundred mariners in the navigation of ten vessels, with an aggregate burthen of 2,930 tons. The names of these ships were the 'Mary and John,' of 900 tons, the 'Mary Redcliffe,' of 500, and the 'Mary Canning,' of 400, which cost him in all 4,000 marks, worth considerably more than 25,000*l.* in our money; the 'Mary Bat,' and the 'Katherine of Boston,' of 220 tons burthen apiece; the 'Margaret of Tynney,' of 200 tons; the 'Katherine,' and the 'Little Nicholas,' of 140 each; and the 'Galiot,' of 50; besides one of about 160 tons burthen, which was lost in Iceland.

It was not alone to Iceland that Canning sent his great ships. In 1449 Henry VI. addressed letters of commendation to the master-general of Prussia and the magistrates of Dantzic, inviting their favour towards his factors established within their jurisdictions, and especially towards William Canning, 'his beloved and eminent merchant of Bristol.' In going to these parts, Canning was opening up a branch of commerce almost new to Englishmen, and treading ground hitherto all but monopolized by the Flemish merchants. In 'The Libel of English Policy,' written in 1436, we read:—

'Now beer and bacon are from Prussia brought  
Into Flaunders, as loved and dearly sought;  
Iron, copper, bow-staves, steel, and wax,  
Boars' hides and badgers', pitch, tar, wood, and

*flax,*

And Cologne thread, and fustian, and canvas,  
And card and buckram,—of old time thus it was.  
Also the Prussians make their adventure  
Of silver plate, of wedges good and sure  
In greates plenty, which they bring and buy  
Out of Bohemia and of Hungary;  
Which is increase full great unto their land,  
And they be laden, as I understand,  
With woollen cloths, all manner of colours,  
By dyers' crafts full diverse, that be ours;

That is, with dyed cloths exported from England by the Flemings.

The favours shown to Canning

by Henry VI. were not altogether unselfish. The last and worst of the Lancastrian kings, more extravagant and not less needy than his predecessors, followed their fashion of exacting aid from wealthy subjects and paying them by conferring special privileges connected with trade. There is no record of payments made by Canning to Henry, but that they were made is hardly to be doubted. We know that he was a zealous Lancastrian, and served his king by all the means in his power, having been made bailiff of Bristol in 1431, sheriff in 1438, and mayor in 1441 and 1449. In the latter year—the same year in which he was recommended to the Prussian and Dantzic authorities—he used his influence with the Common Council towards putting the town in a proper state of defence against the threatened attacks of the Yorkist party, rapidly gaining ground in the west of England. In 1450, 15*l.* were spent in repairing the walls of Bristol, and 40*l.* in the purchase of 'certyn gonnes and other stuffe necessarie for the defence of the said town,' being '20 botefull of warpestones, all the saltpetre that may be founde in the towne, and a dozen brasyn gonnes, to be made shetyng (shooting) peletts as grate as a Parys ball or less, and every gonne with 4 chambers.'

In 1451, Canning was sent to Westminster as M.P. for Bristol, two shillings a day being allowed by the city authorities for his expenses; and while there he took part in some memorable business. The business most concerning us at present was the voting of 1,000*l.* to be levied from the more important seaport towns, and used in equipping a fleet 'for the protection of trade.' The money was to be made up of subsidies on all wine imported at 3*s.* a ton from native merchants, and 6*s.* a ton from foreigners, and of 1*s.* in the pound on the value of all other merchandise, with the exception of cloth, imported or exported during three years from April, 1454. The proportions in which the 1,000*l.* was to be levied give us some clue to

the relative importance of English trading towns in the middle of the fifteenth century. London was to contribute 300*l.*, and Bristol, next in importance, had to furnish 150*l.* Southampton was assessed at 100*l.*, York and Hull at 100*l.* between them, while another 100*l.* was to be collected at Norwich and Yarmouth, and another at Ipswich, Colchester, and Maldon. The contribution of Lynn was reckoned at 50*l.*, while 50*l.* more was to come from Salisbury, Poole, and Weymouth, 30*l.* from Boston, and 20*l.* from Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Parliament dissolved in 1455, and on the summons for a new one, Canning was at once re-elected by the Bristol men. In 1456 he served as mayor for the third time; and in this year we find him entertaining Margaret of Anjou, coming to Bristol to try and quicken the interest of the western people in the dying cause of her husband. He himself was not slack in his allegiance. 'A stately vessel, only for the war,' we read under date of 1457, 'is made new at Bristol, and the said town, with the west coasts, will do their part.'

These efforts, however, were not successful. Having been again made mayor in the autumn of 1460, Canning had in the following spring to entertain the new king, Edward IV., when he came on a visit to those parts. The entertainment was in princely style, and a quaint pageant, illustrating Edward's many virtues and great generosity, was prepared for his amusement. But the king did not come to be amused. His chief business in Bristol was to inquire into the wealth of its various merchants and see what benevolences could be obtained from them. Canning, the richest of the number, and doubtless the most zealous supporter of the Lancastrian party, was found to possess the nine ships already named, and had, in consequence, to pay no less a sum than 3,000 marks, representing about 20,000*l.* of money at its present value, 'for the making of his peace.'

Unfortunately, we are not told what was the estimated wealth of

the other Bristol men, or what were the benevolences exacted from them. But the royal purse must have been tolerably full before Edward left the town. Canning was only the foremost of a crowd of merchant princes then living in Bristol. One of the chief was Robert Sturmy, mayor in 1450, and some years older than Canning. He lived in princely style, we are told, keeping open house for the traders of all lands. His principal dealings were with the Levant. In his younger days he had gone to Jerusalem, taking a hundred and sixty pilgrims thither in his good ship 'Anne,' and finding room also for some rare articles of commerce which would more than pay the cost of the journey. But on his return, he was shipwrecked near Navarino, on the Greek coast, and thirty-seven of his companions were drowned. He himself lived to run other risks. In 1458, we read, 'as the fame ran that he had gotten some green pepper and other spices to have set and sown in England, therefore the Genoese waited him upon the sea and spoiled his ship and another;' but for this offence the Genoese merchants resident in London were arrested and imprisoned until they consented to make good the value of the lost property, estimated at 9,000 marks. Other merchants contemporary with Canning were the Jays, a large and influential family, famous in two generations. One of them was bailiff of Bristol in 1456, another was sheriff in 1472. In 1480, we read in a contemporary narrative which it is hard to disbelieve, although there is evidently some mistake in the record, 'A ship of John Jay the younger, of 800 tons, and another, began their voyage from King's-road to the Island of Brazil, to the coast of Ireland, ploughing their way through the sea. And Thyde was the pilot of the ships, the most scientific mariner in all England; and news came to Bristol that the said ships sailed about the sea during nine months, and did not find the island, but, driven by tempests, they returned to a port on the coast of Ireland for the repose

of themselves and their mariners,' and there, for aught we know, they repose to this day.

Other merchants mustered round Canning and worked with him in making Bristol rich and famous during the disastrous period of the Wars of the Roses. The most important act of his last mayoralty, in 1466, was the forming them into a sort of guild, for mutual protection in regulating the prices of various articles of trade and mutual help in misfortune. Such an association would ill agree with the free-trade principles of modern times; but by this means Bristol was doubtless saved from much misery under the later Plantagenets, and enabled to prosper beyond all precedent under the earlier Tudors.

But Canning, now sixty-seven years old, did not seek for winning any of the benefits to be obtained by the guild. After many years of married life, he had become a widower in 1460, and it is probable that all his children, if indeed any of them passed out of infancy, were dead before this time. He had grown rich, and had now no further need for riches. Much of his wealth he spent in the restoration of the noble church of St. Mary Redcliff, and tradition makes him the founder of many charities. But he was not willing to let it go into the purse of the king, to whose cause he was opposed. The story goes that a project of Edward IV.'s for finding him a second wife, and of course exacting a large sum of money in honour of the marriage, forced him to retire suddenly from the business of this life. At any rate, for some reason or other, in 1467 'he gave up the world, and in all haste took orders upon him, and in the year following was made priest and rang his first mass at our Lady of Redcliff.' He was made Dean of Westbury in or near 1468, and died in November, 1475.

With William Canning ends the short series of men who must serve to us as representatives of the great body of English merchant princes under the Plantagenets. Other men there were and must have been worth singling out from the great

mass of traders in the middle ages, either for their special virtues or for their special skill in commerce; but we do not know them. We can learn nothing of the merchants who made such towns as Winchester and Yarmouth, Boston and Lincoln, Beverley and Newcastle famous marts and centres of industry. A few names besides those that we have already mentioned have come down to us, but it is impossible to gather round them even the slenderest materials for orderly sketches of their lives. Concerning John Taverner of Hull, doubtless a worthy successor to the De la Poles, for instance, nearly all we know is contained in a single statement to the effect that in 1449 he, 'by the help of God and some of the king's subjects,' had built a great ship, the largest ever seen in English waters, which, because of its greatness, Taverner was allowed to call the 'Henry Grace à Dieu,' and to use in conveying wools, woolefs, tin, and all other merchandize, regardless of the rule of the staple, from London, Hull, Sandwich, or Southampton, to Italy, and in bringing thence bow-staves, wax, and any other produce of the country. Of Taverner's great Scotch contemporary, William Elphinstone, father of the bishop who built the university of Aberdeen, we learn only that, by carrying on a large export trade in pickled salmon, he laid the foundation of the commerce of Glasgow; and about two other most famous Scottish merchants of the fifteenth century, George Faulan and John Dalrymple, all we can discover is that they were frequently employed by James II. on embassies and other public business.

Though the men who did the work are almost forgotten, however, there is abundant evidence of the ever-increasing commercial prosperity of our country. The miserable civil wars which brought the Plantagenet rule to a close offered a serious hindrance to the progress of trade, and doubtless drove many men, as they drove William Canning, to abandon it altogether. But ten years after Canning's death, Henry VII. became king of England,

and before another ten years were over, America had been discovered by Christopher Columbus. These two events mark the commencement of a new era in the history of our commerce. The form and dignified rule of the Tudors gave far greater facilities than had ever yet been known to the exercise of trade with European nations, and the finding of a new world opened up a fresh and boundless field of enter-

prise. In speaking hereafter of the men who made the best use of these advantages we shall hope to have material for giving more interesting narratives than the bare records of isolated facts, skeletons dug out of the grave of the past to which it is not possible to restore much flesh and blood, that our readers have hitherto had to content themselves with.

H. R. F. B.



## THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

## CHAPTER XIII.

A PHARISÉE, *comme il faut*.

JOAN ENGLEHEART was right when she said that Mrs. Tudor did not like seeing people eat. But Mrs. Tudor, in spite of this little peculiarity, and several others of a like nature, was not a mean woman. She was too intensely selfish, too avid of the good opinion of others, to be essentially mean. In what she could be stingy, unseen, she was stingy; in liberality that showed she was liberal, liberal, occasionally, to excess.

'I have too much feeling for my own happiness,' Mrs. Tudor would say, when a handsome parson or fashionable physician pleaded some case of misery to her. 'I have always been led away by my heart—too much for my own good, perhaps.' And then, notwithstanding her threescore years and ten, the recollection of so much self-sacrifice and vicarious suffering would make Mrs. Tudor weep—veritable tears, but promptly dried—with the delicacy of a woman who, though she feels, does not mean to parade that feeling to the world; and who remembers whereof the bloom of her cheeks is made!

She never subscribed to public charities even with the seductions of standing in print among lords and marchionesses. 'The widow's mite should be given in secret' was one of Mrs. Tudor's axioms. 'Let the great and rich give away in high places. Enough for me to cast my poor offering into the treasury unseen;' with only the handsome parson or fashionable doctor to act as recording angel.

What will you have? Twenty pounds a year among printed donations of twice, thrice, four times that amount go for nothing in the charitable city where Mrs. Tudor lived. But twenty pounds a year divided into widows' mites in pri-

vate life keep up a handsome reputation for unostentatious almsgiving. Mrs. Tudor knew her generation, and was wise with its wisdom. Every one said Mrs. Tudor was a charming old woman: I think every one, except her family and dependents, really liked her. When she stabbed your absent friends she did it with a delicacy that belongs only to long and refined experience. The coarse blow of a common assassin for ever reminds you that if you, too, have a purse, and take your eye from him, you shall fall. Mrs. Tudor always performed her cruel office out of the depth of her regard for her immediate listener. 'With your dear girls visiting at her house, should I do right to conceal it from you?' 'As the pastor and guardian of your flock, ought you not to be told?' 'With your back garden close upon their area, should I—should I be a friend if I remained silent?' And all the slaughtered characters forthwith rose up in the light of necessary victims offered up by Mrs. Tudor at the altar of Spartan principle and friendship.

Her flattery was as good as her scandal. The same delicate flavour of well-bred discrimination made it palatable, even in inordinately large doses. To tell a woman of forty that she is young and charming would be simply gross; but to say, 'My dear friend, I have something I really grieve to talk to you about: I don't know how you will take it, but as an old woman who had done with life before you began it, I feel that I must speak. All the world is talking of that poor fellow's evident infatuation for you. He is but a boy—spare him! tell his mother to send him to London—anything. You are not offended, now, are you? No; I knew you could not be!'



To say this is to possess a charming, refined nature, even when saying disagreeable things. This was Mrs. Tudor's style of flattery.

She called herself old; and she was very old, even for the city of *sempiternelles* where she lived; but she held old age at bay more stoutly, I really believe, than any other woman of her age extant. She was a model of good making-up. I can never see the justice of condemning, wholesale, all women who paint. Condemn them utterly if they paint badly; but give homage due to all successful works of real art. Mrs. Tudor was extraordinarily well done. Her hair was a dark iron-grey, not any of those blacks and chesnuts that every shifting light can convert into prisms of red, green, and purple; her eyebrows were marked by one dark yet perfectly delicate line; her cheeks bore the faintest roseate tinge that the genius of Paris (assisted by after processes of her own) could supply; her teeth, her figure, were all triumphs of imitative art. The most difficult part of the picture, and one in which so many inferior artists fail, the old, wrinkled, sapless hands were never shown without gloves. I repeat it, Mrs. Tudor was well done; and whether she, or Wilson, or the mere artificers from whence her charms came in gross, possessed the greater genius, I hold that the result of so much thought, and choice, and patient, unflinching every-day labour, was a thing to be respected.

But cultivation is required for all high taste in art. When Esther Fleming first found herself again in Mrs. Tudor's presence, the vision of a painted and galvanized corpse tottering forward to meet her with deathly sprightliness came upon her with even more awful clearness than it had used to do when she was a child. All the painful processes by which Mrs. Tudor's rejuvenescence had been won—the dentistry, the dyeing, the daily padding and powderings and paintings for well-nigh half a century, were mysteries too occult for Esther's mind to unravel, or even marvel over. She liked her Aunt Engleheart's face, white and still as death it-

self: all passion and unrest quenched out of it by long years of poverty and Miss Joan. She liked to see that old face, with the venerable white hair and little close-frilled cap, as the evening light fell on it through the branches of the thorn-tree by the porch; to see the folded withered hands lying peacefully at rest; the whole little, worn, bent form just as though waiting, patient and quiescent, for death to come. This was the poetry of extreme, helpless old age; and Esther often at such times had spoken under her breath, half in awe of the frail, still life so barely withheld from the final stillness of death itself. But Mrs. Tudor! Mrs. Tudor, sprightly and rosy and alert! All the girl's old childish horror of 'something coming off' rushed across her mind as she remembered she would have to kiss Mrs. Tudor's cheek; and every one of the little affectionate speeches she had been preparing on her journey forsook her memory.

Aunt Thalia's warmth of heart was equal, however, to all occasions—even domestic ones. 'Esther, my dear, dear child!' and then, much to Esther's relief, the greatest difficulty of meeting was got over by Mrs. Tudor herself depositing a very long but circumspect kiss upon her cheek. 'So grown I should scarce have recognized you! Wilson, has not Miss Fleming grown? Two shillings for bringing you from the railway? Certainly not. Esther, love, I insist upon your not paying more than eighteen-pence; and let him carry up Miss Fleming's luggage to her apartment before he's paid. Wilson, the small upper room that faces the sea. I knew my dear niece would not mind mounting a little high,' she whispered to Esther, as Wilson, very rustling and dignified, marched out of the room. 'You princess in black silk would have been sour to me for a month if I had dared dispossess her of hers; and my dear Esther's little feet are too young to know whether they run up one or two flights of stairs at a time.'

Mrs. Tudor embraced her again, but without more kisses: these risks were only incurred under the

indispensable press of affection at coming and going: and then Esther remarked that she did not care at all where she slept, and would be very sorry indeed to put Wilson out in any way.

'And how is my dear sister? Sit down, my love, and unloose your bonnet-strings. How is my dear sister Cecilia? You wouldn't have a glass of wine, Esther, after your journey, now—would you?'

'Oh, no! Aunt Thalia. I never take wine.'

'Dear child! so natural! You are very little altered, love, except in height. I take an early dinner, you must know, Esther; my doctor here desires it, and so I obey, but it breaks in upon my habits sadly; then about seven I drink tea. Now *what* will you have?' Mrs. Tudor looked extraordinarily genial and hospitable. 'What will you have? They can get you a chop in a minute.' And she stretched her hand out, figuratively, towards the bell.

'I would much rather have nothing but tea,' said Esther. 'I am not hungry—I mean not very—I had my dinner on the road.'

'Now, do you mean it, my love? do you positively mean it? I will never forgive you if you don't make yourself perfectly at home while you are with me. Well, then, we will have tea at once. And, Wilson,' to that potentate, who had now re-entered the room, 'bid Mrs. Sims send up the cold duck, if you please; it will be just the thing for my niece after her long journey. Wilson will take you to your room, Esther. I would go myself, only that my good doctor tells me I must refrain as much as possible from walking upstairs.'

And then Mrs. Wilson, condescendingly bland, but still with the kind of manner which she, as a servant, naturally felt to Esther as a poor relation, conducted her to her room on the third floor—a three-cornered apartment with a sloping roof, a bed the size of a coffin, and a window from whence you had a very nice side-view of the sea if you sat upon the floor.

'You find your aunt a good deal

changed, no doubt, Miss Fleming?' remarked the lady's-maid, fidgeting about the strings of one of Esther's cases, but obviously only giving herself a pretext to stop and talk. 'Even I, that am with her constant, can see it only too plain. She's pitched away extraordinary the last three months, miss.'

Esther could see no particular change, she answered. She thought, perhaps, that her Aunt Thalia's was not a face to show illness much.

'Perhaps so,' said Wilson, drily. 'Appearances are deceitful; but then you must remember I see missus at all times, Miss Fleming. Thinner! Why, bless you, she's gone away to half what she were before her last attack. I've took in all her dresses without her knowing it; and she thinks, sometimes, she's getting stout again, and tells the doctors so; but I know better. I wish some of them, or some one belonging to her, would tell her a little truth about her health, Miss Fleming, and then, perhaps, she wouldn't kill herself—dressing and racketing and sitting up late at night as she do—kill herself, and I may truly say, kill all those who have to wait upon her too!'

Mrs. Wilson pressed her hand with much feeling upon the region of her left lung, and laid her head on one side with a sigh. It was evident that to her own mind her twenty-five pounds a year were no equivalent whatever to the disadvantages of being in Mrs. Tudor's intimate employ and favour.

'What sort of illness has she had?' she proceeded, when Esther had inquired into the nature of her mistress's last attack; 'why, you don't mean to say your aunt never wrote you word that she'd had a stroke?'

'A stroke!' interrupted Esther, looking grave and shocked. 'Oh, Wilson! you surely can't mean—?'

'Yes, I do, miss. I mean a stroke of paralysis. I lived with the old Countess of Davenport up to her death, and I knew directly I saw your aunt's face she was going to be taken like her ladyship. She *was* a mistress, if you like, Miss Fleming. Thirty-six pounds a year

and the best of perquisites, and a under maid kept on purpose to set up and unlace the dresses at night; because her ladyship said from the first, "Mrs. Wilson," her ladyship says to me, "I see that your 'ealth's delicate, and——"

'And Aunt Thalia, Wilson? Please tell me about Aunt Thalia's illness.'

'Well, Miss Fleming, it was after an At Home at our own house; and missus and me was putting away some of the ornaments, when she cried out, sudden, "Wilson!" and tottered back a step or two, and fell on the sofa—so!' And Mrs. Wilson went through a little impromptu rehearsal, with great gusto, upon the coffin bed. 'I knew what it was in a minute, miss—the thick way of speaking, and dull eyes, and stiff hands, and all the rest of it—and I got her undressed; and Miss Whitty, the—the person who lodges underneath us, you know—sent for the doctor. And *he* knew what it was, Miss Fleming, just as well as I did; and Mrs. Tudor, she knew what it was, too; but we made light of the whole matter; and none of us ever called the attack by its right name, and we don't now. When missus speaks about it, she says, "That time I was a little faint and giddy, you know, Wilson." And I say the same; and so must you, of course, if your aunt should happen to mention it.'

'And Aunt Thalia goes out to parties as much as ever?' cried Esther. 'How can she care about them after such a fearful warning?'

'Ah!' ejaculated Mrs. Wilson, piously, and suddenly remembering the pain above her heart. 'Ah! there's no saying what those that belongs to this world wouldn't do to escape out of themselves and their own tempers and fancies! I agreed to accept your aunt's situation on the highest of recommendations, Miss Fleming. The Dean of Sarum's lady (who has known me since I was *that* high, and all my family, too) begged me herself to take it; and though I had never lived out of the first of establishments before, I was willing to do so because of all your aunt said about my having my

time to myself. Time! why, I'd sooner live with the Countess of Davenport again on half the wages, and wait on the three young ladies besides, than be where I am, Miss Fleming. Morning, noon, and night, I haven't a moment to myself: your aunt wants a nurse, miss, as well as a maid. And though I'd do as much as my strength allowed for a fellow-creature"—Mrs. Wilson assumed the air of a trampled but forgiving martyr—"a fellow-creature in real illness, I don't consider myself called upon to set up o' nights for people that are out at routs and card-parties, and then to have to make their sick-messes, and carry their air-cushion, and put up with their humours by day! Not without extra wages, Miss Fleming! I read my Bible, and I hope I perform my 'umble duties as a Christian, but I know what service is.'

'And this is the woman we have been told is such a treasure,' thought Esther, when Mrs. Wilson, after this little exposition of her opinions respecting her own worth, had left her alone. 'Her great, lonely, fine-furnished rooms, and this woman, with her heartlessness and discontent, are the nearest approach to a home that Aunt Thalia has. I am glad to think Mrs. Engleheart will die poor and quiet and unpretending at Countisbury, and have Joan, with all her faults, to wait upon her to the last.'

She felt her heart almost warm towards Mrs. Tudor when she joined her again down stairs. There was something within her that instinctively recognized and respected the courage of this old woman of the world in neither shrinking from, nor seeking sympathy under, the dark shadow that had fallen upon her. If it was courage wrongly shown (cards, rouge, parties, instead of calm meditation and solemn retrospect), it was courage still; the same stout nerve that had upheld Joan Engleheart during so many years of unpitied, unassisted poverty; the same strong, enduring power that, simple and youthful though she was, lay dormant in Esther's own breast. Yes, she looked at the old bland face that

had met the forerunner of a fearful death just with the same well-bred *insouciance* it would have shown to any other disagreeable but unavoidable visitor, and, for the first time in her life, felt that she and Mrs. Tudor were of one kin.

'You distress me, my love, by eating so little. Really you ought to have something more substantial after your long journey—a poached egg, now? You are quite sure? I meant you to have some cold duck, and, oh, my dear Esther! what do you think?'

Esther, of course, expressed her inability to have any idea whatever.

'I asked the woman of the house to send it up, and she informed me my maid had eaten it for her own early tea—the whole of one wing, and some delicious alices on the back. And she knows that if there's one thing more than another that is likely to tempt me it's a morsel of cold duck.'

Esther laughed. 'Wilson knows what is likely to tempt herself, no doubt,' she remarked. 'Most servants do.'

'She is,' Mrs. Tudor lowered her voice, and looked with meaning (as confidential persons upon the stage invariably look round, but fail to see the infernal villain crouched under the pasteboard portico, at least two yards and a half from their side) towards the door: 'she is the greediest, the falsest, the most rapacious, odious woman that I verily believe ever drew breath, even amidst servants. I keep her because the Dean of Sarum's wife recommended her, and because she understands her business, and does not rob me very outrageously; but her appetite! Oh, my dear child! I often think what I have to go through at the hands of all my maids is my punishment, in the flesh, for caring about worldly vanities in my old age. And, speaking of vanities, where did you have that dress made you have on?—not in the wilds of Devonshire, I am sure.'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, in the wilds of Devonshire. Joan and I made it from the pattern of the white one I had at school.'

'Ah, dear, good Joan!' remarked Mrs. Tudor, evidently just remembering her niece's existence. 'Dear, good, useful, industrious Joan! how is she? and my sister? You have not told me one word yet, love, as to how my dear sister is looking?'

'Aunt Engleheart never seems to change, to me,' answered Esther. 'She looks just as weak and pale and quiet as she did when I first went to Countisbury; but she can dress herself still; and twice this summer she has walked to church and back.'

'Poor dear Cecilia! She was never very strong. I should like extremely to go and see her if I could; but I am afraid the excitement would be too much for her. We were always so passionately attached to each other!' They had not met, or sought to meet, for the last twenty years. 'She was blonde, you know, and I brune; and the difference in age used not to show then as it must now. Blondes always fade all at once when they do fade. That is a *décolornement* to dark women, my love; for, looking old when they are young, they wear better when the first *beauté du diable* is over. How old are you, Esther?—I forget—fifteen, sixteen? Which is it?'

'Oh, Aunt Thalia! I am past eighteen. And Joan and David both think I look two or three years older than that.'

'David! What is David? Whom are you talking of, child? I thought you had no acquaintance among those savage Devonshire wilds.'

'But David Engleheart, ma'am; my cousin David!'

'Never say "ma'am" again, Esther, I beg. It does not sound vulgar from you, but it is old-fashioned and provincial. Call me your Aunt Tudor, or your Aunt Thalia, or even Mrs. Tudor, but never ma'am. Will you remember?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia.'

'And now, if you have really eaten as much as you wish, love' (Esther had eaten nothing), 'we will go and finish our chat by the open window. Yes, sit on the footstool. I like to see you so; the pose is good. Put your left arm a little

lower, and turn your face up towards me. That is right. Do you know you are really very like your great-grandfather? You have just poor dear Garratt's eyes, but you have not the family chin. There you are a Vincent. Your poor mother was a pretty little woman, but without the slightest style. Do you remember her?

'Only a little,' answered Esther. 'I remember she was very white and tired-looking, and hardly ever took me in her arms or had me in the sitting-room to play with her; but that is all. I remember my father much the best.'

'Quite right, my dear Esther; quite right. Your mother's family were very nice people—very nice people indeed in their own way; but there is no occasion for us to remember them. I am glad to find you growing up such a complete Fleming. When I saw you last I was really distressed about your voice and manners, but you have immensely improved now. School has softened you down.'

'I am glad you think so,' said Esther. 'I was afraid I learnt very little for all the money it cost. I am not brilliant, Aunt Thalia. Years ago I used to think I should be a genius, able to write books and do all sorts of things. I rate my own abilities much more truly now.'

'I did not send you to school to learn lessons, Esther, but to acquire style and manner. You have learnt quite enough, I have no doubt, with Joan at home. What you want now is to know how to hide your learning and be agreeable in the world. Men don't like clever women; always remember that. Softness, liveliness, grace, are the qualities you must strive after.'

Esther thought of Oliver, of her never-ceasing, uneasy sense of her own superiority to him, and sighed. 'I am sure you are right there,' she remarked. 'I often wish I was more soft and yielding than I am.'

'Then you wish a very foolish thing, let me tell you, Esther,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'Seem as soft as you choose, but thank Providence for having made you really strong.

You will want all your strength some day, depend upon it. A graceful, feminine manner, and perfect reliance in herself are what a young woman needs to obtain success in society.'

'I don't care a bit for success in society. I wish to have real success—I mean I wish to be really loveable.'

Mrs. Tudor looked hard at her great-niece's candid, flushed face, and laughed. 'You are full of sentiment, I can see,' she observed, 'in spite of Joan having had you in her hands so long. Wait until you have seen a little more of the world, and you will become like the other young people of this generation—like your friends the Miss Dashwoods, for example. I wonder knowing them has not put all romantic fancies out of your head!'

'But Jane ought to be very romantic just now,' Esther felt somewhat conscience-stricken as she put forth this remark. 'I suppose you know she is engaged?'

'To whom?'

'To—to Mr. Chichester, I believe. I know nothing of him.'

'What are you getting red for, child?'

'I am sure I don't know, Aunt Thalia. It is a dreadfully foolish habit of mine. I—I do wish I could get over it,' Miss Fleming added, indignantly, and then she blushed crimson indeed.

'No sign of modesty looks ill in a young person,' said Mrs. Tudor, complacently. 'As long as you are under twenty no one will think worse of you for blushing, and you will find it a habit that time soon cures. Who told you Jane Dashwood was to marry Paul Chichester?'

'Her sister Millicent. She speaks of it in all her letters as a regular engagement. Colonel Dashwood lets Mr. Chichester come to the house as often as he chooses.'

'Colonel Dashwood lets most unmarried men do that, Esther; and in the rare cases where he does not, the Miss Dashwoods save their lovers any trouble by meeting them elsewhere. I have seen a good many of Miss Dashwood's flirtations

during the last five years, although my acquaintance with the family, child, is of the slightest description. Understand that. A formal offer and declension of civility once a year, an exchange of cards in the interval. The lad to whom she engaged herself when she first came out, Arthur Peel, is the nephew of one of my most intimate friends, and I happen to know exactly how the Dashwoods first entangled and afterwards discarded him. Then came George Lawless; then Major Burroughs. I know every particular about them both. Lawless paid old Dashwood eleven hundred pounds to get off at the last moment; and now this last ridiculous affair with Paul Chichester! I have seen her walking about with him, and looking up into his face as she has done with a dozen other men before him; but an engagement—bah! Paul Chichester may be eccentric, but he is not quite such a fool as to take one of Colonel Dashwood's daughters without a penny, and with their reputation, for his wife.

'And what is this Mr. Chichester like, himself? I—I feel a kind of interest in him, you know, as Jane's lover; but the Dashwoods give such conflicting accounts of him that I can form no picture to myself either of his manner or his face.'

'Never speak of forming a picture to yourself, child: it sounds pedantic. You want to know what Paul Chichester is like? Well, you will be able to judge for yourself: he is here in Weymouth.' Involuntarily Esther blushed again. 'He was speaking to me on the walk to-day. A very good style he has; far better, in spite of his threadbare coat, than two-thirds of the young men one meets. I told him I was quite sure from the likeness about the upper part of his face that he was a son of Hildebrand Chichester, and, although he evidently shunned the subject, he did not deny it; and that convinces me that he is the son whom I believed to have been dead, or to have gone abroad, years and years ago. They were a strange family always, the Chichesters,' went on Mrs. Tudor. 'If

the stories that go about them are true, Hildebrand Chichester and his son were about the strangest of them all.'

'What are these stories, Aunt Thalia?'

'Nothing that can interest you, child; nothing, at all events, that it would profit you to repeat to the Miss Dashwoods.'

Esther flushed up indignantly. 'I repeat nothing that is told me. I should like to have heard, simply because I like listening to old family stories, and—and because you tell things in a way that interests one, Aunt Thalia. But don't say a word if you mistrust me. Never say anything of other people as long as I stay in your house if you think I am such a child that I cannot be trusted with a secret.'

'And if I tell you what I know about Paul Chichester, you will never breathe a syllable of it to those little fools, the Dashwood girls? never let the man himself, when you come to be acquainted with him, have the faintest idea that you know more of him than of a stranger? Don't answer: I read your face, child. You believe that you could be discreet as age, silent as death, and up to a certain point I believe you would. At all events, as a little test of your powers, also because I don't really care a straw whether it is repeated or not, I will tell you the story. There is madness in a good many of our old English families, Esther—I suppose that is a fact you have chanced to come across in some of your studies with Joan—more especially, I have noticed, amongst those of the extreme north and extreme south of the kingdom. The Chichesters come from the border, and are not without their share of the aristocratic inheritance—the skeleton,' cried Mrs. Tudor, pleasantly, 'that mews and crouches in the unseen closet of so many a rich man's house; the spectre that is sought in vain to be kept at bay by men of science and art and medicine; and yet that is ever hovering over every christening-feast, every marriage-breakfast, in which any child of the ill-fated house has part.'



'But not—not on him?' broke from Esther's lips as she leant forward and looked, almost with a shudder, into Mrs. Tudor's bland face. 'This horrible calamity has not fallen upon Paul?'

'Don't look so excited, child, or I shall tell you no more. It doesn't matter to you. No Fleming has ever been known to be even eccentric; and as for the Vincents, families like the Vincents never *are* mad, I have remarked. Poor, good people, they are quite enough of everything else, I am sure, without that! Where had I got to? Ah! I know—the Chichesters have not been without their share of the aristocratic inheritance. They are a very old family—not in any way connected with the Dorsetshire Chichesters, Esther, remember that. I must impress upon you the absolute importance of a young woman who aspires to tone distinctly remembering who every human being is. Sir Hugh Chichester, of Newton, the great-grandfather of this young man, married the eldest daughter of Lord March, and from that time until the present there have, I believe, been only two decided cases of the hereditary complaint among them. One, Maria Chichester, a sister of Paul's father, who died quite young, and was indeed more weak of intellect than positively diseased or warped; the other—well, Esther, I will not shock your interest in the reputed lover of your friend's sister by calling Paul Chichester even eccentric. Hildebrand Chichester, his father, was, beyond all doubt, wrong in his mind for years.'

'But are you sure he is this Hildebrand Chichester's son? That he did not deny the relationship does not actually prove that the relationship exists.'

'Well reasoned, *ma petite*; but he not only did not deny, he virtually confessed it. When his father was dead, and his mother married again, I happened to stay with some friends of mine in Northumberland, not three miles from the place of his stepfather's uncle, old Lord Feltham; and speaking to Paul Chichester yesterday, the

whole time and place came suddenly before me—the pink-and-white, silly beauty of his mother always lying on the sofa, and appealing to her husband for the sympathy he would not give; Paul himself, a dark, odd-looking child, running wild about the place, and utterly neglected for the sake of the heir of Newton, the child of the second marriage. "Your Christian name is Paul?" I said. "Then I recollect you well. When you were eight or nine years old you were the strangest, the most unchildlike child I ever came across. Have you forgotten?"

'He looked in my face steadily, and said "No." He had not forgotten one stone or one tree of Newton. Then he added, "But I have not been there. I have not spoken of Newton for years, nor shall I ever do so again while I live. None of the people with whom I associate now belong to that time or place, or know that I belong to it." And then he turned the subject resolutely, and we spoke of his family and of the past no more.'

'And if Mr. Chichester is indeed so well connected, how comes it that he wears a threadbare coat? I am very ignorant, Aunt Thalia. I have always thought that to be a lord's son, or a lord's stepson, even, would insure one, at least, enough to live respectably upon.'

'Then you have thought great nonsense, child; and Paul Chichester was never the stepson of a lord. His mother's second husband died, as far as I recollect, about six years ago, the title having in the mean time gone (on the old lord's death) to his cousin, from whom, if he continues childless, it will of course come to Paul's half-brother. The strange part of the story, the part illustrating the Chichester peculiarity, I am now going to tell you. Although Mrs. Chichester had brought nothing into the family but her pretty face and her imbecility, old Lord Feltham always made a great favourite of her, and on his death-bed requested his son to allow her—her husband was already ailing—to remain at New-

ton. This wish was carried out, and not only this; Paul Chichester received, I am told, an excellent education at the present Lord Feltham's expense (for the younger branches of the Chichesters, you must know, are absolutely penniless. When Paul's mother married again the bridegroom presented her with the very dress she was married in). Well, when the young man was about twenty years of age, his education finished, Lord Feltham about to present him with a commission in the army, some fearful domestic altercation took place, and Paul—the family blood showing—ran away from home, or, at all events, swore to them all, most solemnly, that they should see his face no more, and left them. From different sources I have heard of him afterwards as dead, or gone to the colonies, or roaming about, a ruined man, upon the Continent. But one thing I am certain of—neither his mother, nor Lord Feltham, nor any member of the family, have ever looked upon his face again from that day to this.'

'And you know nothing more of the cause of this quarrel? It must have been no common thing that could make a young lad throw up all his prospects, all his ties, at the very beginning of life, and take of his own free will to loneliness and poverty.'

'No common thing, if the young lad had been of perfectly sane mind, Esther; but with an hereditary tendency like that of the Chichesters, the slightest, the most unfounded suspicion might be enough to make him take up the notion that all his family were in league against him.'

'And does his manner give any indication of his inheriting the family disease? When you remember him, years ago, was he like other children? Aunt Thalia, the story takes possession of me. I feel that, while I wish it, I shall yet dread to become acquainted with Mr. Chichester.'

'In which feeling you show your extreme ignorance of the world, child. Half the people one meets have, probably, more of madness in their brain, certainly more in their

manner, than Paul Chichester. What was he like as a child, did you ask me? Well, really, you know, the subject of children is one that never interests me. I could not bear to be in the room with you, my love, as you may recollect, until you had got well over the age of asking questions and upsetting things. Paul Chichester was like other children, I suppose—no, I recollect, by-the-way, he was not. He was taciturn. He used to come in after dinner at Newton when the nurse brought in his brother, and, none of the family ever paying him the slightest attention, he had a trick of standing apart from us all and staring with his great dark eyes at his mother's face until the young heir had been made enough of and fed, of course, with all the unwholesome things upon the table. Let us speak no more of him, child!' broke off Mrs. Tudor, abruptly, and accompanying the remark by the little deprecatory toss of her gloved hands with which it was her custom to throw off, as it were, the burthen of speaking of anything, or any person, the moment that it no longer amused herself. 'I have so much still to hear about my dear sister and her health. She should come here for a change—really you would not believe, Esther, how few people I have met here whom I know. Mrs. Strangways, and Paul Chichester, and poor good Whitty, who is coming to-night, are all. I have mentioned Miss Whitty to you, of course, have I not?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, I believe so. Is he—is Mr. Chichester, I mean—going to stop in Weymouth?'

'She lives in the dining-rooms under me. I call her my spaniel. She is a good creature in her way, but tiring—tiring and greedy. If she could, she would get me to give all my old dresses to her instead of to Wilson. Draw the curtain aside, Esther, and we shall see the people as they come up from the station. Who is that riding with Mrs. Strangways, I wonder!—hand me my opera-glasses, child, and I shall see better—young Orchard, again, positively. How ridiculous the poor lad is making himself with

that woman! You have heard of Mrs. Strangways from the Dashwoods? She and Jane Dashwood are extremely intimate, and, I should say, extremely well matched.'

'I have heard Milly say they are intimate. Do you—do you think Mr. Chichester will be likely to stay long in Weymouth?'

'She is looking very thin; she has lost all her youth. That is invariably the way with blonde women; they fade in six months. Cecilia lost her complexion twenty years, at least, sooner than I did. I looked as young at five-and-thirty as you do now.'

It was hopeless to think of turning aside the current of Mrs. Tudor's thoughts, especially when the current had set back towards the all-delicious subject of her own youthful beauty. Esther gave herself up, resignedly, to listening to the chronicles of fifty-year-old charms and conquests, and strove, resolutely, but in vain, to turn away her thoughts from Jane Dashwood's lover and his sombre history.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### THE FIRST INFIDELITY.

And what, in good truth, was Paul Chichester to Esther Fleming? Why had Esther Fleming, in love with and engaged to Oliver Carew, coloured guiltily at the mention of her friend's sister's lover?

The reasons for emotion so unwarrantable, and of which Miss Fleming herself felt so duly ashamed, were, she firmly believed, to be found in certain complex sentiments set forth by Miss Millicent Dashwood's last letter; and as I feel I should fail in expressing these sentiments at all accurately, save in the Dashwood language, I will record simply what Milly wrote.

'Jane is going on in her old way with Arthur Peel, who is hanging out at present at the Strangways'. I think Mrs. Strangways makes a *catapaw* of Arthur Peel and Miss Dashwood too; but don't repeat that I said so, for it would make Jenny furious. Paul Chichester is in Bath again, and seems to be

rather relieved than otherwise at seeing Jane sitting out half the night with Arthur on the staircase at balls. I should not like my lover to be so amiable; but my own opinion is, there is no love at all between any of them—except, perhaps, where it would be better dispensed with. By-the-by, Jane says she is sure Paul would admire you extremely. She has learnt some very odd doctrines lately about "elective affinities" (are there two ff's or one?), the results of which seem to be that everybody is obliged by some moral law to fall in love with precisely the people they can't marry. Paul is not your style; I mean, he is not broad-shouldered and chubby, like our Swindon Viking; but, for a dark man, he is very handsome. Jenny puts back the hair off his forehead, and says, "Really, Mr. Chichester, you have quite a Vandyck face. I admire you extremely: how much I should like to be able to find some one worthy of you!" So like Jane. Then she will go to a party that same evening and talk half the night to Arthur Peel, and come back, poor Jenny! and cry till daylight. I dare say you and Paul won't like each other at all when you meet; but Jane relies on her "elective" theories, and, I have no doubt, will warn Paul to fall in love with you: the best way in the world, perhaps, to prevent him from doing so. You poor, dear, old Esther! how I do pity you, with only a tender recollection of Swindon, and a miraculously-proper flirtation with cousin David to keep you from stagnation!

Esther had put down some of this nonsense to Milly's usual flighty style of writing; but she knew enough of the Dashwood girls to feel that, as likely as not, it had all been repeated to Mr. Chichester himself; and, as you have seen, she had not sufficient control to hinder her cheeks from burning at his name. What if she should meet him, be introduced to him! was her reflection when at last she had escaped from Mrs. Tudor's endless stories to the silence of her own little attic. Would she blush, with

this same contemptible folly, in his presence? She who had been able to speak of Oliver without her face betraying the real emotions of her heart, to colour in this guilty way about a person she had never seen—a person with a Vandyck face, and whom Mrs. Tudor considered distinguished? No doubt, a pale, effeminate, vain creature, the exact reverse of all she considered manly and admirable. For the first time for weeks other thoughts than those of Oliver were floating through Esther's brain before she went to sleep; and when she woke next morning she was dimly conscious that something unconnected with Mr. Carew and Countisbury had mingled with her dreams.

'I am going to make you very useful,' Mrs. Tudor remarked when, at eleven o'clock, blooming and airy in her fresh morning toilette, she joined her niece in the drawing-room. 'I am going to make you carry my book and cushion to the beach; and then we can dispense altogether with the presence of Wilson. How are you, my love?' presenting Esther, for an icy second, two gloved fingers of her left hand: 'Have you slept? have you recovered from your journey?' That is well. Now run and put on your hat: anything will do for the beach, my love; you see how I am dressed.'

At Countisbury, Miss Fleming's custom was to put on her hat without so much as looking in the glass; but of course, at a great place like Weymouth, any human being must naturally care more for personal appearance than among the lonely Devonshire moors. When she had put on her holland jacket, and her best little black hat, and the narrow black velvet round her throat, and her dark neat-fitting gloves, she was conscious how well she looked in the extreme simplicity of her dress; and, half-guiltily, she started from the pleasure that consciousness awakened in her.

'You only want an umbrella to be perfectly well dressed,' Mrs. Tudor remarked, as she scanned her niece's appearance with satisfaction. 'I told you to put on anything, because

I wanted to see you plainly dressed. It is the severest test of a young woman's taste. Every one can look well *en toilette*, very few in cotton and hollands. When you have a blue umbrella you will be the perfection of simple style. I will take you at once to a shop, and make you a present of one.'

'But what am I to do with a blue umbrella, Aunt Thalia? the weather is perfectly fine.'

'That is immaterial. All young persons of distinction carry blue umbrellas this season. You need not put it up unless you choose; but you must always carry it in the forenoon—indeed, I should say, you had better never put it up. It will last you longer.'

So they went to a shop and spent sixteen shillings on this indispensable addition to a young person of distinction's dress, and then proceeded to the beach, where, following her physician's advice, Mrs. Tudor forced herself to sit, for a couple or so of hours, every forenoon.

Now Esther Fleming was still of an age when to sit and dream silently at the waves is in itself a vague, voluptuous delight. To watch the pale sky fading in the far horizon, to watch the fisherman's sails starting forth, like the trembling venture of young hope, across the bay, filled her with yearning thoughts, if not of Oliver, of something infinitely dearer in reality—the love she had herself built up for him! And, full of such visions, she would contentedly have sat out the two hours of stipulated sea-air without speaking a word; but Mrs. Tudor, in common, I fancy, with most other old persons, had no liking whatever for being out-of-doors and alone. What dreams had she? what did a fading horizon or departing sail say to her? Her ventures had been put forth half a century before. She had welcomed back to shore ships well-laden with substantial merchandize in lieu of that frail, worthless ballast, with which they first set sail. Whatever interest this Weymouth parade could yield her was on the side where people rode up and down,

not on that where the morning sun glared on her face, and the fresh sea-wind despoiled her best artificial curls, and all the affluence of light, and air, and life told her, with the coarse ill-breeding of nature, how old, and weak, and sunless she, Thalia Tudor, was! She could care for Colonel Dash's new barouche and Mrs. Blank's shabby livery; but the sun, and wind, and dust, and heat, and cold by turns wearied and irritated her to death. At the end of an hour's complaining Esther found she could much more enter into Wilson's frame of mind respecting her aunt's requirements than she could have done the night before; and she was sensible of very considerable relief when Mrs. Tudor described one of her Bath friends, the Miss Whitty already spoken of, approaching them along the promenade.

'My dearest Mrs. Tudor! such a delightfully-unexpected pleasure!' cried this lady in a tone of the most youthful excitement. 'To think, when we last parted, that we should meet so soon again, and at the seaside: really now, it is most extraordinary! Miss Fleming, I'm sure, from the family likeness. How-do-you-do, Miss Fleming? I hope you left your friends in Devonshire quite well?' [Miss Whitty always held it a point of politeness to inquire after everybody's relations, whether she knew them or not. 'It may please—it can't displease,' was her way of reasoning to herself. 'If I never see them, it does not signify; if I do, it is something like an introduction to have been constantly asking about them to their friends.' And to make acquaintance with fresh people was the grand goal and winning point of Miss Whitty's life.] 'I am so delighted we have met,' she proceeded, when Esther had satisfied her as to the sanitary condition of the Countisbury household. 'We can take such nice long walks together by the sea. Do you care for sea-anemones? I am a perfect child when I once find myself among the—the limpets and seaweeds, and things, upon the rocks.'

'I should think you had best stop with me on dry land, Whitty,'

remarked Mrs. Tudor, with a cutting laugh. 'We old women are not fitted for scrambling among rocks, and wetting our feet, like girls of Esther's age. Where are you lodging? My woman tells me there is not a garret to be hired in Weymouth under thirty shillings a week.'

'I have taken apartments in one of the smaller streets, Mrs. Tudor,' answered poor Whitty, evidently with a great many high notes taken out of her by her patroness's first word. 'The people are not very civil; and I am afraid they take the butter already; but I get the rooms on moderate terms, and perhaps, as I shall be out a great deal, the cooking and attendance won't matter.'

'You can get your food with me when you will,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'I dine early here at the sea, and drink my tea at six. You are free to take both meals with me when you choose.'

Remembering Mrs. Tudor's somewhat scant hospitality to herself the night before, Esther was a little surprised at this open-handed offer to any one so hungry-looking as Miss Whitty. She did not yet understand the system upon which Mrs. Tudor's reputation for liberality was based and kept up; but poor Whitty did. Years of poverty and humility, and petty toad-eating, and little deceitful gratitude, had taught her the precise value of all proffered favours from richer people—the exact sort of answer it was incumbent upon herself to give. 'She would not for worlds intrude upon Mrs. Tudor. Nothing was more disagreeable, away from home, than having people dropping in at dinner-time. She would be delighted to come round any evening, or every evening, after tea, if Mrs. Tudor would permit her, and—'

'Very well, very well,' interrupted Mrs. Tudor complacently (''tis the creature's pride,' she remarked afterwards to Esther. 'Whenever I try to put bread in her mouth she makes excuses, as you saw; and she's starving, my dear, she's starving!'). 'You shall come to-night, Whitty. My niece and I will drink

our tea early, and if you come in by seven we shall just have time for a game of piquet before bed-time. I am ordered to be in my bed by ten, and it tells upon me a great deal. I never shut my eyes before one. It tires me a vast deal more than being up.'

'Perhaps the noise of the waves keeps you awake, *mim*,' suggested Miss Whitty, with one of her faint little simpers. 'I had an aunt once who was ordered to the sea, and——'

'Do you know who that is driving with old Lady Fanshawe? I know the woman's face. Who is she?'

'Lady Fanshawe—where, *mim*? Oh, yes! to be sure; in the yellow barouche.' Poor Whitty was always ready to merge her own stories or observations on the faintest interruption from any one else. 'Now I see her face. It's Miss Garth, half-sister, you remember, to the late Lord Riversdale. There was a great talk about her once for Colonel Manners, *mim*; but he went to India suddenly, and she got a situation as companion, you may recollect; and she's had money left her since, and lives in very good style at Cheltenham—quite in the dinnering set.'

'I know her; but do talk grammar, Miss Whitty; "dinnering" means nothing. I knew Amelia Garth; I knew Amelia Garth's mother. She comes of bad blood. Old Lady Fanshawe would do better to mind her own needy flesh and blood than take up with such a woman as you. Who is this coming along the walk? He has a distinguished air. Ah! now I recognize him. Esther, child,' in a whisper, 'this is your friend's lover, whom you were making so many inquiries about. Mr. Chichester, how do you do?'

And Esther, who had been listening with rather vacant attention to the conversation about Amelia Garth, started round, and positively trembled through all her frame on suddenly finding herself face to face with Paul Chichester.

'Mr. Chichester, my niece, Miss Fleming.'

Esther bowed, very distantly and cold: Paul smiled. 'I am quite

accustomed to hear your name, Miss Fleming. I was intrusted with a great many messages for you, in case I should meet you here.'

'Oh! I am much obliged;' and then Esther stopped, and felt more confused than she had ever done in her life before.

'You were at school with Miss Dashwood, Esther, were you not?' said Mrs. Tudor, with a sharp look at her niece's downcast face. 'Mr. Chichester has recently come from Bath, and can, no doubt, give you news of your young friends.'

'Milly wrote to me a day or two before I left Countisbury, and told me all they were doing, Aunt Thalia. She and Jane seem to have been very gay of late.'

'Not so gay as usual, I imagine,' said Paul. 'I believe Bath is considered to be empty just at present.'

'I heard of two balls and an archery-fête in one week; that sounds gay to me.'

'But it would not to them. Miss Dashwood informed me in the race-week that she had danced four-and-twenty hours in four days, in addition to all her morning fatigue on the course. That is pretty well, I think, even for one of the fastest young ladies in England.'

'Do you mean Jane?'

'Certainly. Don't you know that to be considered fast is Miss Dashwood's own highest and most cherished ambition.'

'I thought you pretended to be engaged to her,' almost rose indignantly to Esther's lips; but as she was going to speak she happened to look straight into Paul Chichester's eyes, and something she read there made her stop short. She forgot her shyness, she forgot her indignation, she forgot Oliver Carew. 'I think Jane makes herself out worse than she is, sir. I could never believe that she was fast at heart.'

'Have you seen many of your friends here, Mr. Chichester?' interrupted Mrs. Tudor, who was inwardly chafing over her niece's deplorable want of *aplomb* and self-possession. 'I have been here a fortnight, and have scarce seen a dozen faces that I know. Weymouth is not what it was a few



years ago. These railways fill every place with the same sort of company. I think I shall begin to spend my summers in Bath for the sake of change. Everything is bad here; the medical men worst of all.'

And then Mr. Chichester had to listen for about a quarter of an hour to Mrs. Tudor's statements of all she had gone through at the seaside; varied only by occasional little echoes and notes of admiration on the part of Miss Whitty, whose eyes and hands and tongue always followed the sentiments of all wealthy persons with the regularity of clock-work.

'Can he really care for those long stories?' thought Esther to herself; 'or is he waiting so patiently only to give me the Dashwoods' messages? How I wish Milly had never written me such nonsense! If the man were a coxcomb he might think anything of me from the absurd way I coloured at meeting him!' And then she gave another stealthy look at Paul's face—I suppose to see if any of a coxcomb's attributes were to be found in its expression.

It was a strikingly handsome face: the forehead broad, the black, clear-marked eyebrows straight and delicate. Esther had sometimes laughed at hearing David descend from his old poets upon the beauty of greenish-grey eyes, but in Paul's face she was first sensible of the singular charm such eyes possess when accompanied by an olive-pale complexion and hair and lashes of jet. There hung in her own bedroom at Countisbury a little old engraving from one of Vandyck's pictures: it bore no name: it was simply the portrait of a cavalier in velvet coat and point-lace collar and ruffle: but from the time when she was six years old, and when she had to stand upon a chair to view her idol closely, Esther had bestowed a whole religion of secret veneration and love upon this engraving. When she first began to like Oliver a feeling of infidelity used to overcome her as she looked at her Vandyck—Mr. Carow's short British features being, as you may imagine, supremely unlike the pathetic, noble type of that unknown face; how-

ever pleasant in themselves when lit up with youth and health and the admiration that they expressed for her. But, as she looked at Paul, every detail of the picture rose, line by line, before her: the dark and delicate sweep of brow; the steady, deep-set eyes of hazel-grey; the clear-cut lips; the resolute chin—all, even to the jet-black hair and olive-brown complexion with which her imagination had been wont to give the picture life, rose before her, just as on many a score of summer evenings she had seen them, half in fancy, half within the little old oak frame, upon the wall at Countisbury. Now she knew what had made her suddenly stop short, had made her suddenly feel that she and Paul were speaking together as old friends, not as strangers whose acquaintance might be reckoned up by minutes. She had met—alas! for the first time—her childish ideal clothed with life; had found, in Jane Dashwood's lover, the type with which she had so vainly striven to identify her own.

'You have seen Mrs. Strangways?' broke in Mrs. Tudor's voice. 'She is a great deal aged, Mr. Chichester, is she not?'

'I don't see any difference in her,' answered Paul, promptly. 'To me Mrs. Strangways is always a very pretty woman indeed.'

'Oh, of course! You young men are all wild about Mrs. Strangways. A boy is riding with her to-day who might be her son? Who is he, Whitty? They are coming here, to the right, on horseback. Who is that silly lad Mrs. Strangways has got hold of now?'

'A son of Colonel Ashton's, mim,' returned Whitty, with her preternatural, instantaneous capacity for answering everything and knowing everybody's history. 'He left Eton at Christmas, and has got a commission in the Carbineers, but won't join the regiment till February.'

'And which is Mrs. Strangways?' Esther asked, with an undefined sensation of curiosity to see the woman Mr. Chichester admired.

'The lady on horseback on our left,' answered Miss Whitty. 'Turn your head a little round from the

son, Miss Fleming; she will pass before us in a moment.'

'Mrs. Strangways is an acquaintance of yours, then, Mr. Chichester?' remarked Mrs. Tudor, when the lady had gone past and bestowed a radiantly-sweet smile on Paul. 'An old acquaintance, probably?'

'Oh, yes! a very old acquaintance,' Paul answered, carelessly. 'Every one who knows London well must know Mrs. Strangways.'

'She's a very nice-looking person, sir, isn't she?' cried poor Miss Whitty, who, on the strength of Paul's last somewhat equivocal compliment, thought she might as well hazard something generally pleasing. 'I believe she and Miss Dashwood were considered quite the two first beauties in Bath last winter.'

'Indeed!' responded Paul, coolly: much too coolly to meet Esther's ideas respecting what was required of him as Jane's lover. 'I should not, myself, place Miss Dashwood and Mrs. Strangways in the same rank as regards beauty.'

'I should think not!' replied Esther. 'Jane Dashwood is fair and fresh and young; and that—that person who has ridden past us is older by years, and looks quite bold and worn and faded. Yes, Aunt Thalia, she does; and I don't like to hear Jane Dashwood named with her.'

'Appearances are so very mis-

leading, Miss Fleming,' suggested Whitty, apologetically. 'I have heard many people say how much they like Mrs. Strangways when they get to know her well.'

'And it is never suitable for young persons, who know nothing on such matters, to pronounce judgment on their elders,' said Mrs. Tudor, rising from her seat with difficulty. 'Mr. Chichester, my lodging is at the red-brick house exactly opposite. I should be glad to see you at any time if you are going to stay in Weymouth.'

Mr. Chichester answered that he was going back to London next morning early; but—and he looked at Esther—he had not yet delivered any of his messages to Miss Fleming.

'Then come and do so this evening,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'We old ladies,' with a glance at Whitty, 'shall begin our game of cards at eight, and if you choose to encounter the stupidity of such an entertainment I shall be glad to see you. Esther, my love, you are anxious to receive the Miss Dashwoods' messages?'

'I—I—shall be very happy to see Mr. Chichester if he will come, Aunt Thalia.'

And then she looked straight in his face, with her honest smile: and Paul, for the first time, thought her handsome.





# THE LOVELY LADY COVENTRY



"LOVELY LADY COVENTRY."

From the Print by Richard Houston.

See the Story of her Life.

## LOVELY LADY COVENTRY.

## The Story of a Belle.

FOR the greedy print-gatherer—  
 omnivorous, rapacious, and pro-  
 vovous—there is now, happily, but  
 little toleration. This artistic craze  
 is but a species of the other esta-  
 blished insanities. The spectacle of  
 the frantic virtuoso, hungering after  
 proofs before letters, first, second,  
 and third stages, plates that have  
 been retouched, India proofs, and  
 other developments of this fatal  
 frenzy, excites only pity and con-  
 tempt, and suggests serious thoughts  
 as to the gracious interference of the  
 Chancellor, and the wholesome re-  
 straint of a Commission.

Still, there is one agreeable shape  
 of this mania, for which there may  
 be indulgence. And what the  
 print-devouring Violinist is content  
 to gorge himself on such delicacies  
 as the public delighted in towards  
 the close of the last century, and  
 purchased and appreciated, when  
 he becomes demagogued in reference  
 to PORTRAITS, and assumes such atti-  
 tudes as all the noble ladies and  
 gentlemen of that day, turning his  
 worthless into a huge fortune—it  
 is hard to be wroth with this agree-  
 able lunatic, who furnishes so deli-  
 cious an entertainment—not for  
 himself merely, but for his heirs  
 and assigns, and but too often, un-  
 happily, for the cheap loungers of  
 the auction-room. These were the  
 'heads' that 'were stuck in the  
 print-shops,' like that admirable  
 boaster's, Mr. Lofly; such a print  
 also, 'in all the print-shops,' did  
 amiable Goldsmith send home to his  
 Irish relations, to show them how  
 much considered he was; such a  
 print was issued of the fashionable  
 Mr. Sterne—afterwards reduced in  
 size and placed as a frontispiece for  
 his sermons. It was Sir Joshua,  
 with the dainty brush and varied  
 colouring, that first exhibited the  
 famous lord or lady upon canvas.  
 Then followed the numerous plate  
 —the most perfect translation that  
 could be conceived outside the world  
 of colour—of the master's exquisite  
 and most tender manner. They are

to be seen now with the Moon set  
 out, so clear, and cold, and delicate,  
 brilliant, rich, full, deep, and full of  
 marvellous effect. Modern work  
 halts after these examples. Lady  
 Smith, MacAnlin, and others were  
 the masters of this school. They  
 have long since laid by their mallet  
 and burin, and it would seem as  
 though their cunning was lost.

The London crowds drifting  
 through the Strand often stopped to  
 stare at a new print—one of this  
 matchless series—which was then  
 'stuck in the print-shops.' The  
 beautiful Lady Coventry, perhaps  
 the most notorious in the repeated  
 roll of English venuses, was painted  
 by a Frenchman, and was a more  
 to be found in the portfolios, some-  
 times in "good condition," clean,  
 fresh, bright, and above all, not 'cut  
 down.' Doubtless in that attractive  
 and unassuming shape, which  
 distinguished the delicately female  
 beauty, she always and inevitably  
 was, as yet never had, immen-  
 sely, second to none out of the past,  
 more entertaining than a romance,  
 and quite as profitable as a sermon.

There was a certain Irish country  
 gentleman living down in the West,  
 who is set down in the books of  
 heraldry as 'John Gunning, Esquire,  
 of co. Rosecommon.' That is a no-  
 toriously boggy district; and it may  
 be presumed 'John Gunning, Es-  
 quire,' fulfilled the customary func-  
 tion of many Irish gentlemen of  
 that day, shooting snipe, and other  
 Irish gentlemen, and certainly never  
 dressing of the prodigious beauty  
 that was in store for his two little  
 daughters. He had made a good  
 connection, marrying a sister of the  
 Earl of Mayo; so that the obscurity  
 of the little girls is not quite so  
 great as has been represented. They  
 were born at Castleknock—their  
 father's place—still in the west, bog  
 country; Maria, the eldest, was  
 introduced into the world in the year seventeen  
 hundred and thirty-three, the other,  
 Elizabeth, the year after. Bridget  
 was the name of the daughter of the



"LOVELY LADY COVENTRY."

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See the History of her Life.



## LOVELY LADY COVENTRY.

*The Story of a Belle.*

FOR the greedy print-gatherer—omnivorous, rapacious, and profuse—there is now, happily, but little toleration. This artistic craze is but a species of the other established insanities. The spectacle of the frantic virtuoso, hungering after proofs before letters, first, second, and third stages, plates that have been retouched, India proofs, and other developments of this fatal frenzy, excites only pity and contempt, and suggests serious thoughts as to the gracious interference of the Chancellor, and the wholesome restraint of a Commission.

Still, there is one agreeable shape of this mania, for which there may be indulgence. And when the print-devouring Vitellius is content to gorge himself on such delicacies as the public delighted in towards the close of the last century, and purchased and appreciated—when he becomes deranged in reference to *PORTRAITS*, and amasses such treasures as all the noble ladies and gentlemen of that day, turning his portfolio into a huge Walhalla—it is hard to be wroth with this agreeable lunatic, who furnishes so delightful an entertainment—not for himself merely, but for his heirs and assigns, and but too often, unhappily, for the cheap loungers of the auction-room. These were the ‘heads’ that ‘were stuck in the print-shops,’ like that admirable boaster’s, Mr. Lofly; such a print also, ‘in all the print-shops,’ did amiable Goldsmith send home to his Irish relations, to show them how much considered he was; such a print was issued of the fashionable Mr. Sterne—afterwards reduced in size and placed as a frontispiece for his sermons. It was Sir Joshua, with the dainty brush and honied colouring, that first spiritualized the famous lord or lady upon canvas. Then followed the mezzotinto plate—the most perfect translation that could be conceived outside the world of colour—of the master’s exquisite and most tender manner. They are

to be seen now with the bloom still on, so clear, and cold, and delicate, brilliant, rich, full, deep, and full of marvellous effect. Modern work halts after these examples lamely; Smith, MacArdle, and others were the masters of this school. They have long since laid by their acids and burins, and it would seem as though their cunning was lost.

The London crowds drifting through the Strand often stopped to stare at a new print—one of this matchless series—which was then ‘stuck in the print-shops.’ The beautiful Lady Coventry, perhaps the most notorious on the crowded roll of English beauties, was painted by a fashionable artist, and is now to be found in the portfolios, sometimes in ‘good condition,’ clean, fresh, bright, and, above all, not ‘cut down.’ Looking on that attractive face and graceful figure, which turned half the fashionable heads in London, her strange and romantic story, as yet never told consecutively, seems to rise out of the past, more entertaining than a romance, and quite as profitable as a sermon.

There was a certain Irish country gentleman living down in the West, who is set down in the books of heraldry as ‘John Gunning, Esquire, of co. Roscommon.’ That is a notoriously boggy district; and it may be presumed ‘John Gunning, Esquire,’ fulfilled the customary function of many Irish gentlemen of that day, shooting snipe, and other Irish gentlemen, and certainly never dreaming of the prodigious destiny that was in store for his two little daughters. He had made a good connection, marrying a sister of the Earl of Mayo; so that the obscurity of the little girls is not quite so great as has been represented. They were born at Castlecoote—their father’s place—still in the vast bog country; Maria, the eldest, coming into the world in the year seventeen hundred and thirty-three, the other, Elizabeth, the year after. Bridget was the name of the daughter of the

Mayo family, and the result of the alliance was one son and five daughters, namely, John, Mary, Elizabeth, Catherine, Lizzy, and Sophia. That John grew up from being 'a sweet little boy,' as one who knew him called him, entered the army, fought with distinction at Bunker's Hill, became a major-general in the army and Sir John Gunning. The first was to be hereafter Countess of Coventry and titular belle of the English court; the other was to wed successively the Duke of Argyle and Duke of Hamilton—elevations which, however striking, have been paralleled; not so, however, that union of beauty, fortune, and romance.

What became of 'John Gunning, Esquire, co. Roscommon,' has never distinctly appeared, nor would public curiosity be likely to be much excited in his behalf. One glimpse that we have of John Gunning, Esquire, is characteristic, and shows that the world had gone a little hard with him. He had come up to Dublin, and had lived in that gay capital during one of its gayest epochs, until he could reside there no longer; and, as we are naively told, had been 'obliged to retire into the country, to avoid the disagreeable consequences that must ensue.'

A strange, irregular actress, who about this time had an engagement at Mr. Sheridan's theatre, happened to be one day returning from rehearsal. When at the bottom of Great Britain Street she heard what she called 'the voice of distress.' These were the times when sentiment was fast coming into fashion both before and behind the curtain, and all ranks were diligently petting and cultivating their tender emotions to the very highest point of delicacy. On hearing, then, the voice of distress in Britain Street, the actress at once turned in the direction it seemed to proceed from, entered a house, and without ceremony proceeded upstairs. Strange men, however, stood at the door, about whose garments hung the true *ca sa* flavour; and in the parlour she found a distressed family, consisting of 'a woman of a most

elegant figure,' and who was the centre of a group of 'four beautiful girls' and 'a sweet boy of about three years.' The united voices of this young family had joined in that mournful chorus which had so irresistibly attracted the actress in Britain Street.

The 'woman of a most elegant figure' proved to be Mrs. Gunning, the wife of 'John Gunning, Esquire, co. Roscommon,' she received her guest very politely, and complimented her 'upon possessing such humane sensations.' She then entered upon an explanation of her position—how they had lived beyond their income, and how John Gunning, Esquire, had been obliged, as before mentioned, 'to retire into the country, to avoid the disagreeable consequences that must ensue.' Some hopes had been entertained that Lord Mayo, her brother, would have come forward, 'listening to the dictates of fraternal affection,' and have done something for John Gunning, Esquire, and his family; but this reasonable hope had turned out quite unprofitable; and the ill-looking officials at the door were actually preparing to carry out their stern duty, in virtue of the powers confided to them by the high sheriff. The future countess and 'double duchess' were awaiting with tears this indignity in what is now one of the obscurest streets in the City. But what shall be said of John Gunning, Esquire, who had 'withdrawn into the country' to avoid the inconveniences of this proceeding, and left his family to face bailiffs and executions?

The actress and the lady, however, soon arranged a practical plan—a shape that pure sentiment rarely takes. It was resolved that when darkness set in, the actress's manservant should be despatched to Britain Street, should stand under the drawing-room, and catch any light articles that should be thrown down to him.

Further, the good-natured actress actually agreed to take in the whole of the young family and their servant until some arrangement could be made. Not long after, 'Miss Burke, Mrs. Gunning's sister, a lady

of exemplary piety who had passed her probation in the community of Channel Row, sent for the younger children; but the two famous girls remained with the actress. Maria, the elder, seems to have been 'all life and spirits,' a sort of boisterous hoyden; the other was 'more reserved and solid.'

This charitable actress was the well-known George Anne-Bellamy, who has left behind her some free, outspoken, vulgar memoirs; but which are yet so natural and characteristic, tinged also with that abundant Boswellian garrulity, as to become very entertaining. These were valuable services, which should have left a lasting sense of obligation; though, indeed, Mrs. Bellamy, who always looked very high, might have hoped to have found her profit in a connection with the Mayo family.

After this odd incident the actress was drifted away to London, and became lost in the whirl of theatrical intrigue. How the Gunning family were finally extricated does not appear; but Maria, our heroine, wrote her benefactress a letter—strange both in orthography and composition; but which seems so overdone in its mistakes as to excite reasonable suspicion. It is known, however, that these beauties were sadly illiterate, and so the letter is to a certain degree in keeping. It was addressed to

'MISS BELLAMY IN ENGLAND.'

The following are some characteristic extracts:—

'I rece<sup>d</sup> my dearest Miss Bellamy letter at last; after her long silence, indeed I was very jealous with you, but you make me *amen's* in Letting me hear from you now. it gives me great joy and all our *faimley* to hear that yr Dear mama and your Dearest self are in perfect health to be sure all yr Relations where fighting to see which of them shod have you first and Longest with y<sup>m</sup>. . . . I was very unfortunate to be in the country when our Vaux Hall was. if I was in Town I shod be thear and I believe I should be much more delighted than at a publicker diversion. . . . I don't believe it

was Mr. Knox you read of at Bath for he is hear. Dublin is yo stupides place. . . . I believe Sheredian can get no one to play with him is doing all he can to get frinds for him self to be sure you have hread he is marrd for sirtain to Miss Chamberlan. a sweet pare.

'I must bid a due and shall only say I am my D<sup>r</sup> your ever affe<sup>ct</sup>ed

'M. GUNNING.'

After all, this spelling was not exceptional. Mr. Sterne's MSS. are full of faults almost as gross; and he talks of 'opening a dore.'

What became of the 'sweet little boy' has been mentioned. Of the three younger sisters who are unknown to fame, one, Catherine, married an undistinguished gentleman who is only known to posterity as one 'Robert Travis, Esquire.' The destiny of the undistinguished portion of the family was written by an ancient parish clerk, in a letter to a Mr. Madder, of Fulham, and, appropriately enough, was adorned with spelling quite as unorthodox. 'I take the freedom,' says this odd document, which is dated from Huntingdonshire, 'in wrighting to you from an information of Mr. Warrington, that you would be glad to have the account of my Townswoman, the Notefied, tho Famis, Beautifull Miss Gunnings, Born at Hemmingfordgrey, tho they left the Parish before I had knowledge enough to remember them, and I was born in 32. But I will give you the best account I can, which I believe is better than any man in the country besides myself, though I have not the Birth Register for so long a Date, and since, Dr. Dickens is dead, I dont know where it is.' He then tells of the two elder sisters; and recollects distinctly seeing the Portrait of the wife of Robert Travis, Esq., in a print-shop, 'I beleave in St. Poul's Churchyard,' and who had acquired a sort of reflected reputation from her sister's fame. This was an oval after Cotes, with a scrap of doggrol underneath.

'This youngest grace, so like her sister's frame, Her kindred features tell from whence she came,

'Tis needless once to mention Gunning's name .

But which the memory of the ancient parish fashioned into something more elaborate—

'The youngest of these Beauties here we have in  
view

So like in person to the other two  
Who ever views her person and her fame  
Will see at once that Gunning is her name.'

'Which,' he adds, 'is the best account I can give of them three; but then there was two more, which perhaps you don't know anything about; which I will give you the true Mortalich Register off, from a Black mavel which lies in our chancel, as follows.'

The 'black mavel' tells the story of the lives of little Sophia and Lizzy, in a pretty inscription.

By-and-by the two belles, now grown up, were taken over to London, and almost instantly caused a success and sensation, for which a parallel, in that department, can scarcely be found. They had no fortune, they had slender connections; but fashion in these days was more or less republican. In a society a little wild and frank in tone, and where men of the stamp of Lord March, Selwyn, Mr. Wilkes, and Sir Francis Dashwood were leaders, the claims of dazzling beauty were not to be resisted. They took the town by storm. They burst upon the metropolis in the early months of the year 1751. Walpole, that most full and delightful chronicler, made this appearance a leading item in his next budget for Florence. The wranglings of ministers, he wrote to his friend, were regarded with utter indifference. The Miss Gunnings were in everybody's mouth, 'being twenty times' more talked of than the Newcastle family and Lord Granville. These, he says, are 'two Irish girls of no fortune, who are declared the handsomest women alive. I think,' says the critical Horace, 'their being two so handsome and such perfect figures is their chief excellence, for singly I have seen much handsomer women than either.'

Many stories flutter about as to their first entry on the gay London social boards. Mrs. Gunning was not likely to step from Great Bri-

tain Street into the Mayfair of these days without some miracle of fashionable society being specially worked for her. One legend was, that some cruel wag sent them sham cards for a great lady's masquerade, but which the Irish mother was skilful enough to detect, and which she 'improved' with the wit and daring of her country. She waited on the noble lady in person, taking care to bring with her one of her matchless daughters. She told of her false card. The eyes of the noble lady were upon the daughter. She thought of her masquerade, and, as may be imagined, substituted a genuine for the forged invitation.

The new belles received a shape of homage that was almost inconvenient, for when they went forth upon the public Prado, and took the air in the parks at fashionable hours, they were attended by such admiring crowds that it soon became impossible to enjoy that pastime. The public admiration was not restrained by any feeling of delicacy, and was perhaps the more acceptable as an honest testimonial. That was in June. In August they were still cynosures, and 'make more noise than any of their predecessors since the days of Helen.' No wonder Mrs. Montagu spoke of them as 'those goddesses the Gunnings.'

But their fresh Irish *naïveté* and, it must be said, rough *brusquerie*, laid them open to all manner of strange stories and ill-natured remarks. An odd legend went round the clubs. They went down to see the paintings at Hampton Court; and having passed into what is called the Beauty Room, where are the questionable shepherdesses of King Charles, they heard the house-keeper show another company in with this introduction, 'Ladies, here are the Beauties.' The wild pair, assuming this to be directed to themselves, flew into a violent rage, asked her what she meant—that they came to see the palace and paintings, not to be shown themselves.

They were in the best society. About Christmas in the same year, it was not surprising that each should have a distinguished ad-

mirer. James, Duke of Hamilton, a wild roused Scotch nobleman, 'equally damaged in his fortune and person,' says the bitter Horace, met her at a masquerade, and fell desperately in love with Elizabeth, the younger. Lord Coventry, 'a grave young lord of the patriot breed,' was the professed admirer of the other. Everyone watched the progress of the business eagerly. The malign Lord Chesterfield was inclined to think it would end doubtfully for the honour of the lady. She and her mother played a bold but skilful game. They appeared everywhere with the noble suitor. When he had to move the address in the House of Lords, the brilliant Irish girl sat beside him, and thus caused him to be agitated by the two passions of fear and love. Her mother told Lord Granville afterwards that 'the poor girl' was near fainting with agitation. The duke vaguely proposed marriage some time in the spring. Lord Chesterfield presently gave a magnificent assembly, at which every person of quality was present, who were to be amused with the spectacle of the duke's frantic courtship. He sat at one end of the room, and played faro and carried on a disorderly flirtation with the young beauty who was at the other end. Three hundred pounds was on each card; so in a very short time by these tactics he was a loser of nearly a thousand pounds. The Hon. Horace Walpole was among the company, taking sarcastic notes. 'I own,' he said, 'I was so little a professor in love that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl, and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all.'

Two nights afterwards, the strange *dénouement* came about. Her mother and sister were away at Bedford House, and the duke found himself alone with the famous belle. A sudden ardour—whether of wine or affection—seized on him, and he insisted on having the ceremony performed at once, and on the spot. A parson was promptly sent for, but, on arriving, refused to officiate

without the important essentials of a license or a ring, neither of which had been thought of. The duke swore, and talked of calling in the archbishop. Finally, the parson's scruples gave way before his impatience; the license was overlooked, and the lack of the traditional gold ring was happily supplied by the *ring of a bed-curtain!* The ardent duke was at last lawfully married, at midnight, in Mayfair Chapel. This adventure threw all London into an uproar. The Scotch were furious; 'the women mad that so much beauty has had its effect' (thus the bitter Horace); and, better than all, it had a stimulating effect on the admirers of her sister, for Lord Coventry at once gave out that he intended marrying the sister; and within three weeks, on the 5th of March, 1752, she was, according to the suitable phrase, 'led to the hymeneal altar.' This rise in their fortunes brought about a perfect *furor*, both of curiosity and enthusiasm. The public, who had crowded before to see them as 'the Gunnings,' with the true instinct of a mob, became frantic to see them again in their new and higher station. We see in the old music-books a Lady Coventry's minuet. When the duchess was presented at court, the noble persons at St. James's actually climbed up on tables and chairs to have a good stare, like a mere vulgar crowd. When they came out to their chairs to go to parties, they found immense mobs gathered. There was a rush to take places at the theatres if it became known they were going. The critics, however, were not unanimous. The Duchess of Somerset thought her 'too tall to be genteel, and her face out of proportion to her height.' Her dress, too, was thought rather to savour of the ballet than of an English lady of quality. To the Duchess, Lady Di Egerton and Mrs. Selwyn appeared quite as pretty and a good deal more modest.

In a few weeks their lords took them down to their respective castles, and 'one hears no more about them,' save this simple fact, which amounted to a good deal, that when

the duchess put up one night at a Yorkshire inn, no less than seven hundred people sat up all night round it to see her get into her post-chaise in the morning! She was always good-natured, and gave Tate Wilkinson benefits at his theatre.

When the season came round again, there were no signs of a reaction. But a new beauty had appeared in the horizon, and comparisons began to be made. The world was talking of Lady Caroline Petersham. Mrs. Grenville, writing to her husband, tells him, as a little bit of gossip, that the 'Morocco ambassador'—whose standard of beauty, however, would have been directed by barbaric canons—actually preferred Lady Caroline to Lady Coventry. Both were now being taken over to another metropolis, to confound our hereditary enemies—or allies?—in their own capital. The Gunning went with a vast prestige. A lucky shoemaker of Worcester was making her a pair of shoes, and actually 'turned' two guineas and a half, in pennies, for showing them! Still the old *gaucherie* was not softened down; rather it became more conspicuous by their high position; and the ill-natured public indemnified itself for its insane freaks of admiration by circulating all manner of what are called '*spropositos*.' 'I can't say,' even Mr. Walpole must admit, 'her genius is equal to her beauty.' It would be unreasonable to expect such a combination.

Looking at the brilliant mezzotint which once hung in the printshops, we can gather a faint notion of those wonderful charms which once so dazzled the London lieges. Something very bright, very spiritual, very dazzling; but what all agree was the greater charm, is, of course, lost. This was the extraordinary play of expression, which comes from wild spirits, and which may still be seen in many Irish girls. Mrs. Delany saw her often, and noted this special attraction. 'She has a thousand dimples and prettinesses in her cheeks, her eyes a little drooping at the corners, but fine for all that; she has a thousand airs, but with a sort of humour that

diverts me.' There was a good dash of the hoyden about her, with some of that polite sauciness which is more or less the titular belle's prerogative. The pretty elegy, in which the Reverend Mr. Mason bewailed her loss, touches very happily on these charms, and, with the aid of her picture, sets her before us—

'Whene'er with soft serenity she smiled,  
Or caught the orient blush of quick surprise,  
How sweetly mutable, how brightly wild,  
The liquid lustre darted from her eyes!  
Each look, each motion, waked a new-born  
grace  
That o'er her form a transient glory cast,  
Some lovelier wonder soon usurp'd the place,  
Chased by a charm still lovelier than the last.'

Mr. Mason's lines were greatly relished at Cambridge. They were got by heart and adapted to the charms of university sempstresses and bed-makers.

This was the figure that the Parisians now saw at all their leading *fêtes*; but, as might be expected, the French refused to confess their admiration, or, at least, would not allow themselves to be dazzled. It is natural, indeed, that when a beauty or singer comes, with heraldings and flourishes, their patents should be looked into jealously. Lady Caroline Petersham they dismissed contemptuously, not crediting that she had ever been handsome. Lady Coventry was admitted to be passable. But there was a native belle in the field, one Madame Brionne, to whose charms even the English abroad testified; and French beauty, fortified with the graces of French wit and training, and refined by the associations of the most elegant court, was scarcely fair competition. The Roscommon girl, as her friend Walpole remarked, 'was under piteous disadvantages.' For she was 'very silly, ignorant of the world,' and could not speak a word of French; and was not to be redeemed as to any of these failings by her husband, who was the best illustration in the world of what the French call '*bête*.' He is described as being 'sillied in a wise way, ignorant, ill-bred, and speaking very little French himself—just enough to show how ill-bred he is.' He



was, in fact, a sort of titled fox-hunting squire. He was, besides, *openly* jealous—a fatal and unpardonable *sottise* with the French—and almost childish in his treatment of her. He would not tolerate any rouge or powder upon her cheeks, adornments then so fashionable, and which was indeed an excusable stretch of conjugal tyranny. At a large dinner-party at Sir John Bland's, he fancied he perceived the presence of this forbidden cosmetic on her cheek, and instantly rose, chased her round the table, caught her, and with a napkin actually 'scrubbed it off by force'—it may be imagined to the intense amusement and surprise of the persons of quality then assembled. He then sat down in a pet, and told her publicly that since she had deceived him and broken her promise he would take her back to England.

It does not appear that she was presented at the court of the gallant monarch who then ruled France; at least, that scrupulous courtier, Dangeau, who registered every presentation, makes no mention of her. The French, however, were very anxious they should stay for the grand *fêtes* at St. Cloud that evening, but her lord said he was obliged to return, as he said he would not like to miss a musical meeting at Worcester! There were some fireworks at Madame Pompadour's, to which she was invited, but she excused herself on the ground of her music master coming at that hour. The Duc de Luxemburg, the pink of French quality, when they were leaving some party, came to tell him that he had called up Milady Coventry's coach, upon which my lord 'Vous avez fort bien fait.' The *combe* to these joint *délices* was when the Maréchal de Lowendahl admired an English fan of Lady Coventry's, who, upon that, presented it to him. But next morning came a letter, asking it back, and saying that it had been presented by her lord before marriage, and that parting with it would cause an 'irreparable breach.' An old one was sent instead. On this, the beautiful stranger went round telling her wrongs to everybody, saying, it is

'so odd my lord should treat her in this way, when she knew he would die for her, and he had been so kind as to marry her without a shilling.' It may be imagined what the polite but amazed Frenchmen thought of these confidences. It must be recollected she was eighteen.

They returned to London. The year after Mrs. Delany saw her at a party—a party where the Duke of Portland wore 'a coat of dark mouse-coloured velvet,' and a vest of 'Isabella velvet'—and described her as 'looking in high beauty.' In the November of the following year, one Sunday afternoon, a ducal friend brought the famous countess from church to visit Mrs. Delany: 'To feast me.' And a feast indeed she was. Her dress was 'a black silk sack, made for a large hoop, which she wore without any, and it trailed a yard on the ground.' She also wore 'a cobwebbed lace handkerchief, a pink satin long cloke, lined with ermine mixed with squirrel skins.' That wonderful face was adorned with 'a French cap that just covered the top of her head—of blonde—and stood in the *form of a butterfly with wings* not quite extended.' The whole was completed by lappets tied under the chin with pink and green ribbons; a head-dress, in short, which charmed the Dean of Down's lady. Still she was struck by 'a sort of silly look at times about her mouth;' and in the portraits there are traces about that feature of a little weakness.

After all, she seems to have had a sort of unsophisticated good-nature, which all the extravagant worship she was paid did not impair. She was not a 'hollow' beauty, and had friends as well as admirers. One of the prettiest stories about her, is her behaviour to the young Irish hoyden (a belle also, whom fickle London was already beginning to talk of) who had naively asked to have her pointed out to her.

A grand masquerade had been given at Somerset House, at which was a little Irish beauty—a Miss Allen, an unsophisticated 'lively sort of a fairy,' says Mrs. Delany. She went up to Lady Coventry, and looking at her very earnestly, said,

'I have indeed heard a great deal of this lady's beauty, but it far surpasses all I have heard. 'What!' said the other Irish belle, 'did you never see me before?' The young girl's *naïveté* amused everybody. A gentleman then took her about, showed her everything, got her a good seat at supper—everyone, to the astonishment of the young girl, bowing and making way for them. At the end of the night he turned out to be the Duke of York. The story has quite a Cinderella air.

Horace Walpole testifies to this good-humour under certainly trying circumstances. 'If she was not,' he says, 'the best-humoured creature in the world, I should have made her angry.' It was at a great supper at Lord Hertford's, and the beauty was asked to take some more wine. She answered 'in a very vulgar accent, if she drank more she should be *muckibus*!' "Lord," said Lady Mary Coke, "what is that?" "Oh," said Mr. Walpole, "it is only Irish for sentiment." Lady Mary Coke, we may be sure, would not be slack to point attention to the odd phrase.

Her short race was but for eight years; and yet, to the last, London training seems to have had but little effect on the old wild nature. In one sense, this is a good testimony to her disposition. Even the year before her death Mr. Jenkinson filled in a corner of one of his letters with a story about her which was then amusing all London—'a silly action,' he calls it. Walking in the Park, the mob had been disrespectful, incited by her airs. It came to the ears of the king (that good-natured king to whom she had said, that of all sights in the world 'she longed to see a coronation'), and on the following Sunday evening he sent her a guard, to attend her as she walked. A discreet person would have declined the questionable honour, but the saucy countess exulted in her escort, and made a triumphant progress with 'two sergeants in front carrying their halberds, and twelve soldiers following behind, and the whole guard held ready close by to turn out at a moment's notice.' Thus attended, the

gay countess continued her promenade from eight until ten o'clock, the mob also forming part of the procession, and not restrained by the military force from uttering some plain truths—so plain, indeed, that 'Fielding's men' had to take up a few. As an illustration of that 'silliness in the mouth' which Mrs. Delany remarked, this is worth a whole essay.

So her short butterfly life passed. We have glimpses of her down at Crome, the family seat, with a household of company, and 'Gilly Williams,' one of the Selwyn set (whose letters should be more known), and 'old Sandys,' while the earl good-naturedly held a faro bank every night, which 'we have as yet,' writes Gilly, 'plundered considerably.' There was a certain captain there who is mentioned as 'studying a pretty attitude for the countess.' She was then 'in high spirits and great beauty.'—Poor countess!

But in August, 1760—the great Tristram year, when Mr. Sterne was in London—she fell sick. That bourgeois husband of hers was not altogether so foolish in his generation when he chased her round the Paris dining-room and rubbed the paint off her cheeks with a napkin; for she had since had her own way, and used to daub her cheeks profusely with white-lead. To this abominable custom—one of the sacrifices which Moloch fashion then demanded—she is said to have fallen a victim. She was living down at her own place, and a Doctor Wall, who attended on her, wrote to Mr. Selwyn an account of her sickness, making, as he said, 'no excuse for being minute, because I believed that it would be most agreeable to you that I should be so.'—For the profound wit was of her admirers. She was very ill indeed, having an oppression on her chest, with a sort of spasmodic rheumatism. She was very weak, and the bourgeois husband was away. The marvellous charms began to pass away, and the discovery of this fatal change brought on, perhaps, her real malady. It is painful to read how it affected her. She never was without a pocket-glass in her hand, and when

this sad truth-teller betrayed to her the ravages of disease, she seems to have lost all hope and spirit, took to her bed permanently, allowed no light in the room but 'the lamp of a teakettle,' and actually took things in through the curtains without suffering them to be withdrawn. This recalls another death-bed scene—that of the charming Mrs. Oldfield, Pope's Narcissa:—

"'Odious in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke."  
Were the last words that Narcissa spoke.  
"No; let a charming chints and Brussels lace  
Wrap my cold limbs and shade my lifeless  
face;  
One would not sure be frightful when one's  
dead—  
And, Betty, give this cheek a little red."

Unfortunately, a letter for Lord Coventry was brought in to her, the handwriting of which she recognized as that of her sister. She opened it without scruple, and read in it a touching lament over her own piteous case; the duchess bewailing her hard fate in not being able over to see her again, and plainly considering her case as hopeless.

The effect on the wretched beauty was almost fatal. The doctor rushed to the room, and found her almost dying. Through the rest of the day and night she passed from one fainting fit to another. Her attendants thought she had not an hour to live, and hurried expresses were sent for Lord Coventry, who was to arrive the next night.

On the 1st of October she died. That Walpole really felt her death—as much, indeed, as that water-

colour Voltaire could feel the loss of any living thing—is evident from his letters. 'The charming countess is dead at last,' he wrote, five days after her demise. The Reverend Mr. Mason tuned his genteel lyre to some desponding chords for the occasion.

'Yes, Coventry is dead! Attend the strain,  
Daughters of Albion: ye that, light as air,  
So oft have tripped in her fantastic train,  
With hearts as gay and faces half as fair,  
For she was fair beyond yon brightest bloom,  
This Envy owns, since now her bloom is  
fled.'

Lord Bolingbroke, known to his wild friends as 'Bully,' had affected a sort of *tendresse* for the Countess; and it is said that when news was brought to Newmarket of her death, he acted a burst of well got up emotion, and left the room, says spiteful Horace, to hide not his crying but his not crying. But 'the mob,' as the same authority usually styled the broad, bold citizen element of the British people, held by her to the last, and ten thousand people witnessed her funeral.

Old Mr. Gunning, who had risen with his daughter's fame, and had got into good society, was seen by Lord March, two or three years afterwards, at a grand masquerade. He wore 'a running footman's habit, with Lady Coventry's picture hung at his button-hole, like a cross of St. Louis.' This is the last appearance of John Gunning, Esq., of Roscommon. By that time, no doubt, the rest of the world had forgotten her.



## ART IN A RAILWAY STATION.

## II.—The Electric Telegraph: an Allegory.

IN our last number we gave an engraving and brief notice of the large allegorical fresco of 'The Railway,' painted by Herr Echter, at the end of the great hall of the Munich Railway Station. We now add the companion fresco—'The Electric Telegraph.'

When Mr. Watts offered to paint frescoes in the hall of the Euston Terminus for the mere cost of the materials, his offer, as we have seen, was blandly though peremptorily declined. Had a proposal been made to the directors of the North Western, Great Western, Great Eastern, or any other great line, to decorate the walls of their head station with huge allegories, like these of Herr Echter, and to pay a fair price for them, one can appreciate the surprise with which they would have received the proposition, and the suspicion they would have felt of the sanity of the proposer. But if, under some malign influence, they had entertained the project, what alarm and indignation would have seized the opposition at the next meeting of the shareholders, and with what noisy unanimity would the wasteful and iniquitous scheme have been summarily spurned!

But, not to resort to improbable instances, it seems to have almost become one of the understood, if not written, canons of accepted critical results—those results which are such a comfort to quiet common-sense folk—that Allegory is hardly suited to our practical, matter-of-fact, iron age, and that if, out of consideration to honoured precedents, it may be properly enough allowed a place on the walls of a mediæval palace of legislature, it would certainly not be justified in invading the domains of the railway or telegraph. In ancient Greece and Rome, the personages of the mythology—whether deities or attributes—were at least actualities. They were mingled with every one's thoughts of earth and sea and sky, associated with their ordinary everyday actions, the agents of all extra-

ordinary events. They were believed in by the great mass of the people, even when the more cultivated were becoming indifferent, if not sceptical.

With us, the heirs of all the ages, the denizens of this iron-traversed half century, these mythic beings are merely shadows of the past. We know all about them, and care nothing for them. We have outgrown allegory. A little innocent symbolism is just tolerable—as a sort of universal stenography, a matter of convenience—for the outside of a county court, or the seal of an insurance office, the top of a column, a tombstone in a cemetery, a painted church-window, or a national memorial in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's. There Hope may have her anchor, Justice her balance, St. George his dragon, St. Catherine her wheel, St. Peter his keys; and if they are smooth-faced, neat-limbed, classic-looking figures in sculpture, or grim, gaunt, lanky, and mediæval in church-work, we know they are orthodox, and are content.

Content, that is, for such strictly official art; for in all our public works—whether architectural or monumental—we are a patient, much-enduring, peace-loving, though grumbling people. But outside this official art we are more exacting, and there we resolutely avert our face from allegory. We have come in every branch of art to demand more reality—to speak plainly, more meaning and more truth. But whether, in order to attain that, it is necessary to abolish allegory altogether, is a matter which our artistic friends and guides would do well to consider. Allegory is but the higher poetry of representative art. It is in no sense dependent on the pagan's worn-out creed. It seeks 'to convey a larger sense by simpler means,' to utter that which, if expressed in the poet's fitting words, would satisfy an intelligent reader. Among its means are

images and symbols, its essence is vivid personification. It addresses itself, therefore, to the imaginative as well as the reflective faculties. But, at its best, all it asks is an intelligent consideration—an audience such as would enjoy and sympathize with the poet in his higher moods.

If, however, this higher form of art is again to lay hold of the common mind, to be a thing really felt and enjoyed as well as understood, it must not only abandon all the effeminate Della Cruscan use of worn-out names and attributes, but must present itself in an intelligent and comprehensible as well as poetic guise. It must neither be supersubtle, nor vaguely recondite, but clear to those who will take the trouble to understand it: though even on the walls of a railway station an allegory need not be like a Notice to Passengers, so expressed that he who runs may read.

Herr Echter has, in the pictures before us, fairly grappled with the requirements of a modern allegory, if he has not wholly mastered them. In the 'Railway' and the 'Electric Telegraph' he has essayed to deal with the Present without resorting for assistance to the Past. His personages are the beings of To-Day, as mirrored in his Imagination. He has not sought to exhaust his conception, but leaves something to the imagination of the spectator. He has given not the whole thought, but the suggestion of the thought—so that, as is ever the case in true poetry, he will there find most who brings most.

Herr Echter is still a comparatively young man. A Dantziger by birth, his art education belongs wholly to Munich. He is one of the most trusted and the most original of Kaulbach's pupils. With Nilsen he painted the great pictures on the exterior of the New Pinacothek at Munich, and he has executed much of those in the New Museum at Berlin, working only from the master's cartoons, and without his personal superintendence. Echter's original works have not been numerous, but he was employed by the King of Bavaria, Maximilian II. (just

deceased), along with Von Schwind, Hiltensperger, Piloty, and Foltz, to paint a series of large pictures from the leading events in the lives of the Bavarian princes, and his share of the undertaking is considered to be certainly not the least successful. The present is, however, his most ambitious effort.

The picture of the 'Electric Telegraph' is, in many respects, very different in feeling from that of the 'Railway.' It is wider in scope, more universal in its appeal. The other was local, or, at most, national, in its range of vision. The overturned bureaucrat is essentially German. The scattered gate-tickets, wanderbuchs, passports, are all German, but the Bavarian are the most marked. On the other hand, the 'Electric Telegraph' is written in a language common to all. And as it is higher in aim, so is it more purely poetic in expression, lovelier and more graceful in imagery.

The Electric Force, personified as a female of powerful frame, and capable of swift energetic action, occupies the centre of the composition. She is an earth Power, strong, sinewy, muscular, as having much work to do and the capacity to do it. Though sufficiently freed from her native earth to accomplish readily the work that lies before her, she is yet not wholly freed, still drawing from it life and vigour. Her mighty arms, stretched apart to their utmost extent, indicate the opposite electric poles. They are upheld by peasant hands, the hands of the stalwart, heavy-browed miners, to whose industry she owes her free external existence, and on whose aid she still depends. Upwards streams from her the marvellous fluid that accomplishes daily and hourly for us wonders greater than ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. It flows forth on all sides, from body arms and hands—even her wild hair streaming out like tongues of fire charged with messages of weal or woe. But while it streams forth thus madly, it is gathered up by one hand and transmitted in a freely flowing yet regular current, traceable behind the buoyant children, to the opposite hand, whence it is carried

down, and the mystic circle is completed.

On either side, sitting with an open scroll on her knees and pen in hand, is a nymph—typifying, as suggested by the slight indications of vegetation at their feet, one luxuriant, the other scant and small, the opposite ends of the earth. The nymph on the left is whispering a message into the ear of her attendant messenger—a winged child, unconscious as the actual telegraph's material wires, of the meaning of what it conveys. By him the message is transmitted to the second of the chain of genii, with whom he is in connection (hand linked in hand), and thus it is carried on to the last, who repeats the message he has so mysteriously received to the right-hand nymph, and she in her turn swiftly writes it down.

Such, as it appears to us, is, broadly, the purpose of the allegory. Every German holds himself free to interpret an allegory after his own fashion, and some famous allegories have, consequently, almost as many interpretations as interpreters. Very likely, therefore, this of Echter's may be found differently rendered by German critics: but our version will, we believe, be found tolerably faithful to the author's meaning. Be it understood, however, that we only profess to have sketched the broad outline. The reader must fill in the details for himself. And he will find, as he does so, not only that the analogy will come out much more fully, but that many a delicate and subtle trait will reveal itself. We have, for example, indicated the connection and affinities of the female personifying the Electric Force, with earth, the metals, &c.; but dwell a while patiently on the group of which she is the centre, and see how many

other, and finer, are the scientific and poetic relations which the painter has at least desired to suggest: how many are the turns of thought for which these serve as galvanic conductors. So, again, notice the manner in which the message is conveyed, how carefully the idea of the *secrecy*, as well as the rapidity of the transmission of intelligence is rendered. The nymph who forwards the message places her hand against her face, that not the feeblest echo of the words she whispers may reach any other ear than that of her tiny child-messenger, who, on his part, curves his hand around his ear with like design. So the child who imparts the message moulds both his hands, trumpet-like, as he hovers above the nymph who receives it. She, again, sets close her hand before her ear that no syllable may be lost, or murmur onwards, to be caught up by vagrant listeners.

These are but crude hints: the reader will easily improve on them. If they set him in the right track, it is all that is needed. Of the beauty of the composition as a work of art; the power of drawing; the skilful arrangement, regard being had to the place the picture occupies, and the distance from which it has to be seen; the grandeur of form, and majesty of expression in the female representing the Electric Force; the loveliness of feature in the listening nymph, and the grace of both, with the fine contrast between them and the central figure; the beauty of the buoyant children—and in drawing children Echter almost rivals his master Kaulbach, happiest by far, in this matter, of all the Munich painters—of these and other technical merits, and shortcomings, this is not the place to speak, and the reader will be best pleased to find them out for himself.



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Engraved by Mr. A. Lockey, from a Painting by J. B. Ponce

THE MEXICAN PATRIOT, AN ALBANY

From a Painting by J. B. Ponce





Engraved by W. J. Linton, from a Photograph of Webster's Press.

# THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH: AN ALLEGORY.

See a set in a Railway Station.



## EASTER EVE AT ST. PETERSBURGH.

THE days when East and West contended about the time at which Easter should fall are over, as far as we are concerned, and the English congregation at St. Petersburg conforms itself to the practice of the National Church by keeping Easter according to the Eastern and not the Western practice. The Russian mode of ushering in the festival is so different from anything that we are accustomed to in England, that an account of it may interest some readers, especially as it possesses the charm of undoubted antiquity.

In England, on Easter Eve, we go to bed as usual, and wait patiently until broad daylight has ushered in the joyful day; but the Russian is not content so to do. He considers it begun as the last stroke of twelve dies on the ear, and is impatient to welcome it. At the Palace some thousand people assemble, late on Easter Eve, for the service in the Imperial Chapel, and while the Gospel is being read, the guns of the fortress sympathetically announce to the whole city that 'Christ is risen;' whilst, after the service, each one of the guests hears the news from his sovereign's lips, and exchanges with him the Easter salute. This has, however, been reduced, in consideration of the number of recipients, from three to two kisses.

It is not among the higher ranks alone that Easter morning is thus anticipated, and welcomed with excitement. Every church, from the grandest to the most humble, is thronged with worshippers; and happening to be in St. Petersburg on Easter Eve, I felt anxious to see the service performed at the Isaak Church, which, from its form and size, may be called the St. Paul's of St. Petersburg, though vastly superior to the latter in its great magnificence. I had been warned to start early, and accordingly set off at ten o'clock p.m., having about two miles to walk. Even at that early hour, streams of people were to be seen on their way to their

respective churches, whilst all along the streets saucers of tallow were placed at intervals on the pavement, each with its blazing wick diffusing a smoky, greasy smell, which was far from agreeable. Here and there, also, servants were hurrying along, bearing in cloths the Easter cakes, and a kind of cream cheese, that they might be blessed by the priest before being eaten. Towards the great church the largest number was flocking, and as I entered with the throng, a curious scene presented itself to my gaze. Excepting a part railed off in front of the altar, the church was moderately crowded with people of the lower class, chiefly men, whilst along the walls, and around the bases of the columns, were reclining numbers of peasants in their sheepskins, looking somewhat like gipsies under a hedge. These had come early to secure places, and were bivouacking until a quarter to twelve, when the service began, and all had to stand. Each of them held in his hand apparently a slender white wand, which proved, on closer inspection, to be the wax taper, not yet lighted, which it is the custom for everyone to hold during the time of service upon special occasions. The dome, about the size of that of St. Paul's, but unlike it in being decorated with coloured marbles, frescoes, and gilding, was only lighted by four or five groups of votive tapers, which burned on a raised platform in the centre, around a tomb with the figure of the Saviour painted on it, which had remained there since Good Friday. No sound was heard but the buzz of subdued talking, and the voice of those who were taking it in turns to read some portion of Scripture on the platform, which had continued from the time of the afternoon service, any one who liked being allowed to read. Presently those who were admitted by ticket to the reserved portion began to enter, and many pausing, crossed themselves, and stooped and kissed the tomb. The

body of the church began also to fill, and an uninterrupted stream of people poured in at the doors. Within the rails of the altar is a magnificent screen, separating off the Holy of Holies, adorned with immense pictures exquisitely worked in mosaic, and pillars of malachite and lapis lazuli. It has three doors; the centre one, or royal gate, was now opened, and the Metropolitan, attended by several bishops and priests, came forth. Before him were borne a triple, a double, and a single candle, emblematic of Christian doctrine, and they walked round the tomb, bowing and swinging censers. Their gorgeous dresses, jewelled mitres, and flowing beards, seen amidst the smoke of the censers had a most striking effect, and I could almost have imagined myself witnessing some ceremony of the old Jewish worship. After kissing the tomb, the bishops raised it at the corners, and held it resting on the head of the Metropolitan, whose mitre had been previously removed, and in this manner they all retired within the gates, which were again closed.

And now a curtain was drawn aside which had covered a coloured transparency representing a figure of the Saviour, which appeared over the gates, and at the same moment a flame ran along the cords, which lighted the large chandeliers and a cluster of candles high up in the dome, and from several points the assembled thousands began to light their tapers. I had not provided myself with one, but presently I felt a tap on my shoulder, and some unseen benefactor (for to turn round in the dense crowd was out of the question) supplied my deficiency. This seemed to be a general practice, to judge by the number of tapers I saw handed about. Again the doors opened, not to be closed again during the Easter week, and the procession came forth—the choir chanting a hymn announcing the resurrection, whilst candles and banners were borne by some of the train. A passage was with difficulty cleared for them by the officials down the centre of the church, and they moved on, singing, and

proceeded, on leaving the west door, to make the circuit of the building.

Whilst they were doing this I had time to look around me. We were packed as closely as possible, each with his flaming taper increasing the otherwise excessive heat, whilst the mass was occasionally convulsed, as fresh comers, with one going before as the point of the wedge, worked their way into it. The heads of the people appeared to have been anointed with something in honour of the occasion which made them glisten in the candle-light, whilst not a few of them got singed in the press, whether purposely or not I could not feel sure. One man I observed with a bright red head of hair, to whose locks a bystander deliberately applied his taper, with an exclamation of disgust at their colour. The odour of the crowd baffles all power of description. In no country is one's sense of smell gratified by an assemblage of the lower orders; but in Russia the peasant wears his sheepskin and boots all through the winter by day and by night, and this in huts closed against ventilation, reeking with the smell of its inmates, their fish and their cabbage; and when it is considered that some thousands of them were crammed together in a building already artificially heated, the state of the atmosphere may be faintly conceived by those who have not experienced the reality.

After a time the procession re-entered the church at the same door by which they had left it, and the service was continued; but however impressive it may be to those who understand the language, and are not pinioned in a crowd, to one who enjoys neither of these advantages, the fine music, which, as in all Greek churches, is solely vocal, fails to atone for the discomfort, so I determined to extricate myself, knowing that the service would continue for at least two hours. The task proved easier than I anticipated, and after pushing my way, shoulder first, through the crowd of dirty, good-humoured faces, I reached the door at a quarter



to one. The streets were singularly deserted, but several churches into which I looked presented a similar scene to the one I had just left, being filled with the same dense crowd with their burning tapers; whilst outside the doors were placed quantities of Easter cakes, each with a lighted taper stuck in the centre,

awaiting the priest's blessing. I was not sorry to reach home at two o'clock, and resign myself for the remainder of the Easter morning to sound slumbers, which were only broken by the sound of salutes from the fortress guns, which twice came booming at intervals across the Neva. C.

## TWO APRIL PICTURES.

## I.

THE first of April! Many an ancient vision  
Those words recall—the bygone days of school;  
When it was wit's *chef-d'œuvre* to heap derision  
(Albeit mildly) on an April fool.  
When strong in youthful faith we fondly cherished  
Illusions which were rudely put to flight  
By chorused laughs. So sank our trust and perished,  
Type of the after years' long ceaseless fight.

## 2.

But there are two more pictures limned so clearly  
Upon my memory through the buried years;  
I see them even now so close—so nearly—  
And yet so far off in the mist of tears.  
One is a stately room, through which is streaming  
A crowd of beauties robed in splendid guise;  
The flashing jewels on brow and fingers gleaming,  
Paled in the radiance of those flashing eyes.

## 3.

It is the April Drawing-room—the fairest,  
The noblest of the land are gathered now  
To pay their homage. One there is—the rarest,  
Sweetest in her fresh grace of lip and brow;  
The feathers bending o'er her braided tresses  
Of darkest chestnut-gold—the sweeping train—  
The radiant hazel eyes whose look caresses  
All fill the picture which I see again.

## 4.

I see her first in all that scene of splendour,  
I see the looks of wonder from the crowd  
At her sweet face, so lovely—yet so tender  
In timid innocence—the head just bowed  
As if subdued by the wide admiration  
That circles round her in each word and sign;  
And ah! I see with love's wild exultation,  
The precious glance that answers back to mine.

5.

Two years have passed. It is an April morning,  
And I am kneeling in a darkened room,  
Where all the signs of sickness give their warning  
Of the deep shadow rising in its gloom;  
And by the couch I kneel—kneel tightly clasping,  
While my tears burn upon that tiny hand,  
Which faintly presses mine as if still grasping  
Her love while drifting to the unknown land.

6.

The fair young face is beautiful as ever,  
But pale as marble and so worn and wan,  
For the frail thread of life each hour may sever,  
And those dread hours have fled so swiftly on.  
The ripe red lips whose melody has spoken  
Existence' poetry to me are hushed,  
I kiss and kiss them—but my heart feels broken,  
My brain seems burning and my spirit crushed.

7.

And I can see, too, in the picture plainly  
A tiny baby-form whose week of life  
Is almost over as it wails so vainly  
For its girl-mother. And at length the strife  
Of death and nature ends, and as the morrow  
Dawns, there looms my loss in all its power,  
To veil my life in silent sacred sorrow,  
And fix within my soul that one dark hour.

8.

April is sunny, and its vernal gladness  
Wakes joy in most hearts—but to me its tone  
Speaks in the accents of a dreary sadness,  
Tells me so plainly that I am—alone,  
Alone with only memory, which stealing  
All other pictures save that April morn,  
Will only paint me bowed in silence, kneeling  
By my own darling—left for life forlorn.

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## MY ROWING DAYS.

BY AN OLD UNIVERSITY OAR.

**I**T was with somewhat of trepidation that I 'put up' for the Lady Margaret Boat Club. I was a sizar; a poor man. No Johnian sizar had ever been elected to the club before. But 'I was born a gentleman, before I was made a sizar; and being proposed by two men of good position in the college, I was elected with only one 'black ball,' that one being deposited in the ballot box by the son of a Chartist

M.P., who thus showed that his levelling was to be done by pulling all down to his own position, and by keeping all below him who were in that very inferior position.

I had been down the river in a four-oar a few times with the ex-captain of the Westminster eight, and had the benefit of his 'coaching,' so that I did not row long in the third boat, but was soon promoted to the second, and in the first

term of my belonging to the club had the honour of rowing two races in the first boat. Our boat was third, and had not been 'head of the river' since the days when Bishop Selwyn, of New Zealand, and Bishop Tyrrell, of Newcastle (one of the Australian dioceses), rowed in it. Poor Bishop Mackenzie, of the Central Africa Mission, was rowing in the Caius' boat when I first went up. His boating experience, and that of Bishop Selwyn, afterwards did them good service in their mission work. We made no bump that season. In the following October term, the club won the 'four's,' after a hard race. Our hopes for the head of the river then began to increase, and in the March term we felt sure we should 'do it.' The stroke of the winning four came up to row, and his fine, steady stroke soon got the crew into good style and swing. He has since distinguished himself as an Alpine climber—being one of the first party who mounted Mont Blanc without a guide. The same stamina and pluck that have carried him over Alpine peaks and passes then served us in good stead on the Cam. We had a good, but not heavy crew. Bow little, but muscular. Two, our captain—my old coach. Three, a Wrangler of that year—a strong, awkwardly-made man, with a decided touch of eccentricity. Four, a well-made wiry man, afterwards in the University boat. Five, a heavily-built man, who would smoke. Six, a new hand, who got all the slanging. Seven, a well-made man, under eleven stone. The coxswain an experienced steersman, cool and self-possessed.

The first day of the races in the Lent Term we started third. Black Prince was head of the river; the Eton and Westminster Club second; Emmanuel behind us. There was a flood out, and the stream was tremendously strong. Anxious to get a good start, we got out from the bank too soon. The bow of the boat was across the river. Our eccentric 'three' began by rowing as hard as he could, and nearly drove our bows into the opposite bank. In the mean time the boat behind us had made a good start, and was

nearly into us; but before they quite caught us we were underweigh, and soon walked away from them. The Eton and Westminster men had also got off well, and had soon gained a distance. Nothing daunted, we got into swing, and by dint of steady rowing, caught them soon after we had passed 'The Plough' corner—thus making our first bump. We knew that the Black Prince would be tougher customers, and laid ourselves out for harder work the next racing day. This time both boats got off equally well, and hard was the rowing on both sides. The Eton and Westminster were left far behind; but where the others were, we, tugging at our oars, and not daring to look behind us, knew not. But soon the crowds with the two boats seemed to mingle. 'You are gaining' was the shout. At last, when more than three-fourths of the course was finished, our coxswain takes off his hat as the signal for the last effort, and we bumped them. But in vain: a barge had got in their way (and fouled them just before we caught them, and therefore we did not 'claim the bump,' and again rowed up second. Having thus discovered that we were the better men, we determined not to be done out of our bump the next time. While discussing our beefsteaks at breakfast on the morning of the race (the races of the boats 'on the river,' and the 'sloggers,' *alias* 'slow-goers,' answering to the Oxford 'torpids,' were then rowed on alternate days,) we laid our plans, or rather adopted the plan of our stroke. The great thing in a race is to know when to make your effort, for however hard men may be rowing, they can always row a little harder when called upon. The scheme proposed was that we should row steadily till we came to 'The Plough,' where a group of University men was always congregated. Their shouts were to be the signal for putting on a terrific spurt. Men told us afterwards that when we reached 'The Plough' we had just kept the distance, forty yards, at which we started from the Black Prince. The whole crew took up the spurt

beautifully. The boat felt like a cork on our arms. It seemed like madly going backwards and forwards—but to some good purpose; for before we were well straight round 'The Plough' corner we had bumped them, and were 'head of the river.' Never had such a spurt been made in 'the memory of the oldest inhabitant'—Donkin, the landlord of 'The Hoop'—who had seen almost every race then rowed in Cambridge. The Black Prince men said it seemed as if they were standing still, and we rowing into them, and owned that we had done it splendidly. We all rejoiced exceedingly at our success, and felt ourselves, and were thought by all true Johnians, to be perfect heroes.

We kept our place during the other three races of that term; our flag coming up flying as first boat every afternoon.

In the next term we lost our brave stroke and our proud position, though still keeping second.

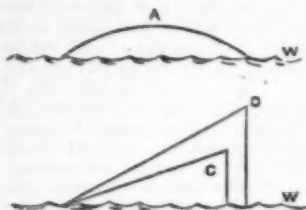
For some time I had heard that I should certainly have a place in the University boat which was to represent Cambridge at the Henley Regatta. At last one evening I found myself amongst the select eight, swinging down from lock to lock on the narrow Cam. We did fair work at Cambridge for a few days, and then went in a large party to Henley, taking with us the Black Prince eight, as well as the University crew. We were a merry, as well as a large party, at the good old inn, near the bridge; and many of us must look back to that week at Henley as being one of the happiest in our lives. We had two or three noisy spirits with us; but the majority of us were reading men, who enjoyed the liberty of English University life without abusing it.

Our work was pretty well cut out for us. A run before breakfast: once over the course at racing pace in the University boat. As the three Black Prince men who were rowing with us were also practising with their college crew, our captain told four of us to borrow a boat and row over the course again. A local club kindly lent us a good old boat, which, with a little patching, we

made strong enough to hold us. We happily were the two extremities of the eight—bow and two, seven and stroke; so we kept the same places in the four-oar, and with the 'Varsity' coxswain made a very fair crew. As we found that we went over the ground in the same time as the Black Prince eight, and that we could beat their four-oar by more than a minute, we thought we might as well enter for the Stewards' Cup, the entrance for which had been left open for the convenience of some Oxford crew. We entered on our own responsibility, as the 'University Qualification Crew'—not sent by our Alma Mater, but not unworthily representing her. And as we had no captain with us, we formed ourselves into a republic, allowing our steerer to exercise the necessary executive functions as president, but all claiming a voice as to when we should row, and when 'easy all,' &c., and most amicably we got on.

A day or two before the first day of the races, the Oxford University and college crews put in an appearance, and at first considerably astonished us by the immense difference between their style and ours. It was especially the very high feather that struck us. They dropped their hands right down to their toes as they went forward, thus throwing the blades of their oars some feet into the air. The advantage of this undoubtedly is that it makes all the oars catch hold of the water together at the beginning of the stroke, and sends the boat along with a shoot. But again, the excessive stooping, as it seemed to us, must be very exhausting. Our Cambridge style then was very much that of the watermen—a moderately high feather—the oar being higher in the air at the end of the feather than in the middle, the body swinging further back than in the Oxford boat, and the stroke pulled well through. I hear that the coaching at Cambridge now is, that the blade should be highest at the middle of the feather, and that it should gradually slope down into the water. If it be so, it is no wonder to me that the Oxonians beat the Cantabs; for I be-

lieve no eight men will get hold of the water well together, unless they give time for doing it by raising the blades of the oars just before they are put into the water.



In the diagram W is the surface of the water. A represents the flight of the end of the oar as recently practised in Cambridge. C is our old Cambridge plan. O, the old Oxford method. Either of the two last seems to me infinitely preferable to the semicircular plan of recent Cantabs.

At last the race day arrived. Our first race was at half-past two, between the Cambridge University Qualification, and Christ Church, Oxford, for the Stewards' Cup, for four-oars. We started evenly, and for about half the distance they kept up with us, but then we went ahead and won in a paddle by sixty or eighty yards. At half-past five came the grand struggle between the eights. We got off fairly together, and for about three hundred yards were alongside; when, sad to relate, our number three, one of the strongest men in the boat, broke his tholepin, or rowlock, and at once the Oxford boat shot out of sight, and we never saw it again till we stopped at the bridge. It is no use raking up old grievances, but it is undoubtedly the case that we felt very sore at being thus beaten, and very angry at the imputation which one gentleman was pleased to cast upon our honesty, when he informed us that we did it on purpose, and that he heard the coxswain give the order for breaking the rowlock. The fact was that poor 'three' at first put his oar in, and tried to row, but when he found that he could not keep his oar in its place, he said to the coxswain,

'What shall I do; I have broken my rowlock?' 'Throw your oar up,' was the answer; and as by this time the Oxford boat was some way ahead, many thought we had been thoroughly beaten even before our accident took place. Thus it happened that we lost the Grand Challenge Cup, and never knew which was the best boat.

The next day we had to row the final heat for the Stewards' Challenge Cup with the Brasenose boat. They stuck to us much better than the Christ Church men had done, giving us some work to beat them by three or four lengths. I have ever preserved my medal for the Stewards' Cup; and that still more precious one with the bi-glott inscription, 'Head of the River,' 'Universitas Cantabrigiensis,' among my most precious relics, and shall hand them down as heirlooms to my sons.

After the races were over, I started with four old Etonians to row down the Thames to Eton. The row the first night was chiefly in the dark, as far as Marlow, where we slept at a rustic inn on the river bank, and the next morning enjoyed the luxury of a bathe close by the memorable bridge under which the barges ate the 'puppy pie,' which they are said to have stolen out of a window which overlooked the river. The chaff, 'Who ate the puppy pie under Marlow bridge?' will still excite the wrath of Thames bargemen.

The next day our fifteen miles' row from Marlow, past Maidenhead, through a lovely country, was one of the most pleasant of my boating experiences. We arrived at Eton in the afternoon, and as a stranger, I was admitted to the exclusive circle of boating men who patronized 'cellar.' This excellent institution was simply a very good lunch of bread in every form, cheese, salad, and beer *ad libitum*. It had originally been held in a cellar, but when I visited it the lunch was eaten in a very comfortable room upstairs. The mode of initiation was peculiar. The youth ambitious of being admitted to 'cellar' had to drink a quart of ale from a curiously-shaped vessel without taking breath. This sacred vessel had a thin stem a

yard long, at the end of which was a bulb, which held the greater part of the liquor to be drunk. As long as the aspirant was drinking the beer in the stem it was easy enough, but when, to get at the rest, he raised the bulb to allow it to flow into his mouth, unless done very cautiously, the beer came down with a rush and nearly choked him. The boy who tried whilst I was present failed. In the evening a scratch Cambridge crew, steered by a man who had never been there before, rowed the Eton eight and beat them easily; though a few days afterwards they beat as easily an Oxford boat with more of the University crew in it than we had.

The next day I was initiated into the mysteries of punting, and left Eton with great regret.

In my last term we went in for the 'fours,' and lost them. I went in for the 'Lady Margaret Sculls,' and was upset, and should have had my head split open by the bow of the boat that bumped me, had I not dived under it. I also was induced to enter with an old schoolfellow for the 'pair-oars;' but as we only had two days' practice, we thought we should be bumped at once, instead of which on the

first day we bumped the second favourites. In the straight I dare say they would have got away from us, but coming round 'Grassy' we had a great advantage over them. I was bow, and could row much stronger than my stroke; I was therefore able to look about me to attend to the steering; and coming round 'Grassy,' instead of his having to 'easy,' as most strokes did, I simply put out all my strength, and brought the boat round the corner at full speed, and so caught them. The next day we got away, after a hard race, from two Queen's men, who had been practising for months, and after all we finished second. Thus ended my Cambridge boating; and if I had my time over again, I should again join the boats, and row as I did before; for I always noticed that unless a man had some regular amusement he fell into idle ways, unless he was of much firmer mould than most lads of nineteen are. If the derivation of the word 'amusement' is kept in view, and that is not looked upon as the business of life which is only its relaxation 'à musie,' no harm will follow from the cultivation of manly sports.

C. U. B. C.

## FROM PUTNEY TO MORTLAKE WITH THE UNIVERSITY 'EIGHTS.'

'VIRTUALLY the race is over, and it only remains to shout.' Such was the answer I received to a question which everybody was asking of everybody else for many days prior to the 19th of March, the day of the great boat-race—and the question was 'Who will win?' It was three days before the one fixed upon for the event. My friend was neither an Oxonian nor a Cantab. He had just seen the two crews perform on London water, and that was the conclusion at which he had arrived. Without claiming for him any special gift of prophecy with regard to matters of an aquatic nature, I may state that it was even as he said.

Everybody expected that the result would be, not exactly what it was. A fine race was anticipated, but that Oxford

would be, for the first time since the establishment of the race, one ahead of their opponents. That expectation was verified. They won. Speaking candidly the race was over in two minutes after the hands that held the boats had let them go. But this, as I have said, was not anticipated, and to see the winners of the first race in the third decade win, was an object worth making effort for. Twenty times had they met in the same water, and half a score of victories had been registered on the tablets of Oxford and Cambridge. Add to this a March morning that for mildness, beauty, and sunshine might contrast favourably with May, and you will be quite prepared, my dear reader, to hear without surprise that the scene on



Waterloo Bridge was like that of a Derby day; that there was an enormous amount of confusion at all the piers on the river, where people would get into wrong boats, and where others were arriving panting from a sharp run, which ended after all in disappointment. I felt for them—I ought, for I was among the number, but then I was in time—only the steamer had gone earlier than the hour advertised. On hearing this I was prepared to feel aggrieved and wrathful. If paper and ink had been at hand, I might even have written to the —; but no, paper was not there, and to be wrathful in that glorious sunshiny spring morning was not an easy matter. I only mention this purely personal feeling because it leads me to an important and interesting fact. My boat had gone earlier because H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was waiting to honour the race, and the Thames Subscription Fund, by occupying a place thereon. And I arrived at the boat in time to join in the cheers which the collegians raised when they saw his face lit by a genial smile, and animated by the general excitement of the hour, and the interest of the coming struggle between the two crews of athletes. What a jolly hearty affair an English cheer is—such a cheer as young men, greeting a young and popular Prince, raise! It really seems to make the blood spin more rapidly along its course. The enthusiasm—affection, is so real and genuine.

Failing steam on the water I found it on the rail, and made one wave in the mighty deluge that flowed down Putney-ward about 10.30 a.m. on the morning of the race. What a splendid scene it was after the dull, dark fog, and the nipping frost and desolation of a long winter! How grandly the revival of spring acted upon the whole being! There were more races in the neighbourhood of Putney that day than the one upon the river. 'Awful jolly' is a shocking phrase; as English it is execrable; but I think I arrived at a tolerable notion of what it means that day. Exuberant spirits, hearty greetings, and a general buoyancy of thought and limb prevailed. Every man wanted to tell his friend that it was 'awful jolly,' and to repeat the assertion frequently, by way of assuring himself that he was fully alive to the circumstance. One didn't want to 'take the odds,' but to see the race, and shout and laugh, and when the race was over, to get up an impromptu picnic in the nearest daisied meadow. The liberal sunshine was everywhere. It seemed

especially to have found its way to men's hearts. The Prince enjoyed it; so did the pedestrians on the banks, and the great human panorama of faces on the bridges was brightened by it. The Oxford and Cambridge eights never rowed in presence of such an assembly before. Royalty, divinity, law, medicine, art, and literature were represented; among them all was but one feeling, that it was a *holiday*—holiday in the happiest sense of the word.

The happiness reached its climax when the Cantabs in their light blue jackets were desisted rowing towards the starting-place, and followed by the dark blues. Steadily they came to the barge, and bowed to the Prince. The two crews were men to be envied. As they removed their jackets, their well-developed figures and powerful sinews were displayed. The Cantab crew looked well—some said like winning men. They were more equal men than the Oxford crew, among whom were two or three powerful athletes. The host of steamers on the river began to move uneasily as the two boats took up their position at the starting-point.

There was a grand sight to be seen between that moment and the one when the race began. The boats were perfectly motionless—so were the men; every man with his oar ready for the stroke. It was the most perfect thing of the kind I ever saw. In work the motion is too rapid for the eye to form any adequate idea of the beauty of the pose. Here was one of the positions maintained for a sufficiently long time for the spectators who were near to see and admire it. The movements of a thoroughly good oarsman are very graceful. The sunshine and the water rippling in it, the cheers, and the buzz of conversation, the concentration of all eyes and all thoughts on one spot and subject, added something to the charm. People felt that it was a very fine thing to be one of the oarsmen in the champion boats. So it was.

At the signal they darted away. I have endeavoured to indicate the position during the pause before the start. I can only hope to make you know, if you, reader, were not one of the many who saw what the first stroke was like, by comparing the sixteen men of the two crews to a very vast and beautiful machine in rest at one minute and the next set in motion at full speed. The sixteen appeared to have no individuality in that first stroke. They were as one man. Beautifully the oars dipped into the water and rose again, scattering the drops from the blue blades; and the sunshine made even Thames water bright as crystal.

Cambridge went ahead, and people be-

gan to talk of 'hedging,' and to wish they had not laid so many sevens to four against them. Still they went ahead, and as they did so the men who bet—and who doesn't lay a little wager, even if it is only a dozen of gloves with a lady, for the sake of having an interest in the race?—made the Cantabs favourites, and there were offers to bet upon them on the very terms they had hesitated at accepting against them. But Cambridge never got a boat's length ahead. The Oxford bowman never lost sight of the Cantabs. It was a vigorous trial of powers. The Cantabs made forty strokes per minute. The Oxonians increased to forty-three, and they pulled away mightily; and it was soon apparent that strength of stroke was with Oxford, and then arose a cry, 'They have passed them!' At this stage, the action of the two crews, as side by side, stroke for stroke, they pulled, was very fine. The light blues made a vigorous effort, but failed to increase the speed; and away went the dark blues, and when next a cry arose, it was, 'They've taken Cambridge water!' after that there was no race. The distance between the boats gradually increased, and it was voted a 'hollow' affair by those who could see it; but this was not possible to many, for the river was choked with steamers, that were not so fast as the University boats, and dense volumes of smoke poured out of the funnels, and swept over the water. The race was run in the shortest time that it has yet been accomplished—21 minutes 48 seconds. The Cantabs were at least from 16 to 20 lengths behind. Had the contest at the finish been closer, it is very probable that the time would have been still shorter. The Oxford crew was unquestionably one of the finest the University has ever sent out to row against the sister university team.

Going back when the 'shouting' had been done, a good opportunity was offered for the study of the two styles. The crews rowed alongside the boat that bore the Prince's ensign; and as an ingenious gentleman remarked, it was evident that they had the 'raw material' at Cambridge, and that what is known as 'good coaching' was all that was wanted. The Cantabs rowed well—in good time and good style, though sometimes they were jerky. Their stroke is a grand one, but the Oxford is grander. They lost the race in a time that would in almost any previous year have served for winning it. They want that *perfect swing and enormous reach forward* which is the characteristic of the Oxonian rowing. Without it they will continue to be beaten. This was the universal remark of the witnesses

of their defeat in the twenty-first race. *It is the first part of the stroke which tells.*

The first of the races was rowed on the 10th of June, 1829, at Henley. It was the inauguration of a brilliant series of gallant struggles between the two Universities. Their boating, as the best exhibition of skill in the art exhibited in London is more attractive than their cricket. Oxford won the first race, but when nine had been rowed the Cantabs were five ahead. During recent years the Oxonians have renewed the position, and the victory of the 19th of March places them first. The Oxonians in the last twelve contests have shown as marked a superiority as their opponents did in the previous nine.

The day's festivities did not end with the race. There were the usual attendants; the great itinerant band of miscellaneous public performers of wonderful feats and shocking music were there, and all was hilarity. Where do these people go to in the winter? Do they, dormouse-like, lie torpid? I cannot say; but their campaign begins with the boat race, and when the leaves fall they are lost sight of till the spring, and another, a greater contest, wakes them up. Not with these have we to do, nor with the billiard match, nor the racket (what a grand festival week, a sort of carnival of muscle and sinew, might be made if the athletic sports, the boat races, and the billiard and racket matches could be held in one week), but with a scene that deserves a paragraph. To some readers the mention of one name will be sufficient to conjure it up. It is 'Evans!'

'Evans's' after the toils of the day—after the general expenditure of enthusiasm with the prodigality of spendthrifts—after the dinner at Willis's—after the speeches and the billiard-match in Leicester-square—there was yet left an abundance of exuberant jollity for Evans's. Muscle and sinew and high spirits are grand things. I do not attempt to describe the scene, for I have not space; and the said muscle and sinew and high spirits refuse to be set down on paper. The enthusiasm was so complete—the fraternity so great—the free interchange of thought—the merry jokes—the mighty cheers that rose when the champions came in, and when the extempore song-maker sang their victories, were demonstrations which had significance. It is such a capital thing to forget sometimes that one is a student, a lawyer, a doctor, or a journalist, and be simply a man—a rowing or a cricket man, ready to apply to your fellows only the standard of skill in the pursuit of these bracing pastimes.

## Young England's College Sports:

### A DAY WITH THE CHAMPION ATHLETES OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

'ARE you ready, gentlemen? Go!'

And then the eager race began, and with it a new era in the sports of the Universities, and, as I believe and hope, in those of England generally. The gentlemen, I may remark, *en passant*, obeyed the emphatic command of the starter, and went with a promptitude and speed that Mercury, had that deity been present at the time, might well have been pardoned for regarding with envy.

The scene was Christ Church Cricket-ground, Oxford. The time was shortly after noon on the 5th of March, a soft spring day—it seemed the first day of spring—the blackbirds were whistling; over distant fields, the larks were trying their pinions and their voices, ready for the chorus of May; the air had that peculiar sweetness which follows a gentle rain and prompts one to ramble to the woods in the belief that the primrose and the violet will there be found in all their beauty. The gentleman who gave the word of command was standing behind four whose toes were pointed to a line of tape that stretched across the green-sward. They were four comely, well-proportioned men. They wore no caps, one had no boots, and their costume generally was of the slightest kind. So much the better, thought I, since it gives to me a better opportunity of observing the beautiful figures of the athletes who stand before me, whose skins are snowy white, and whose arms are suggestive of great strength, though, except at the muscles, they are delicate and fair as a lady's. They stand in a roped course: on their breasts they wear the University colours—the light-blue of Cambridge and the darker dye of Oxford—sewn upon their white Jerseys in shape of a cross or a star: it has a pretty effect. On either side of the course on which I stand are long lines of men, and here and

there are groups of ladies, who look on with an interest that is scarcely surpassed by the keenest lover of athletics among the students who throng the edges of the course. To the ladies it is certainly a novel sight.

'Go!' And they were gone before the little monosyllable had died on the lips of him that uttered it. The athletes of the Universities, with the fresh bloom of youth, health, and strength upon their cheeks, who had stood motionless as statues, leapt into marvellous activity. The race was not so much for personal honour as for that of the whole University of which they were the chosen representatives. They were contending, as the 'flower of the youth' of Greece contended of old, for honour. Glances from bright eyes were not wanting to reward the efforts of the victor; and as they sped away over the green-sward with the first daisy of the year beneath their feet, the voices of their friends and fellow-collegians arose in one mighty shout that sent the name of the favourite echoing away to the turrets and the towers of the distant colleges. The race was but a short one. A trifle more than half a score of seconds sufficed for the running of it. What varied emotions may be crowded even into that brief space of time! The astonishing feat of living an age in a moment is usually supposed to be confined, in actual experience, to the heroes and heroines of novels. Far be it from me to disturb the supposition, but I would say that if any man has a fair chance of arriving at an adequate knowledge of what men mean when they describe that kind of thing, it is he who runs a race with varying fortunes, is passed and repasses, and loses in the end.

Ask one of those Cantabs or Oxonians who ran under the circumstances which I have mentioned, what deep and opposite emotions

he knew while he was striding the hundred yards of the race, as if upon each stride depended his dearest hopes in life. He will tell you what a pleasurable thrill he felt while 'leading,' when the heads of his friends were bared that hats might be waved in his honour, adding to the loud huzzas that arose on every side another stimulus to exertion. Then will come, if he be a faithful interpreter and narrator of his own emotions, an account of a deplorable sense of disappointment which stole upon him when the opposing Cantab came up with him, and he felt that his power of going faster was gone. Still he hoped as they strode breast to breast and stride for stride for a short distance, and then he dropped behind. Meanwhile the shouts died away, and when they rose again another name was uttered, and he grew conscious of the fact that he had been first in the race for the last time; that knowledge, come when it will, and be 'the race' of what kind it may, is always a sad one; or, maybe, he tried to do what is called 'putting on a spurt,' and to catch his opponent, and his comrades, observing the gallant effort, raised another faint cheer in which his name was heard; but this entirely subsided when the effort, which was of no avail, relaxed, and another competitor passed him, and left him to 'come in' an indifferent third, with the knowledge that his opponent had wrested from him, and the University, the honour which, when half the race was run, seemed within his grasp. Had he won, the victory would have been not his, but that of his University. He has lost; and the knowledge that it is not an individual defeat does not make it more easy to bear. In this way eleven seconds may be made to seem a very long time. It is a mistake to suppose that the necessity which exists for hard and vigorous action prevents all this being felt. It rather heightens the effect by giving increased activity to the nervous system.

The race was run amid a tumult of cheering, and victory was with Oxford. It is in the natural order

of things that wherever a contest is waged, and whatever its character may be, if there is a victor there must also be a vanquished. It is easier to bear defeat well than to achieve a victory and wear the laurel with becoming modesty. Not a little of the charm of the University sports lay in the perfect evenness of humour with which the enthusiastic students triumphed or failed.

Victory is generally very sweet, and defeat is proportionately bitter. I was witness of a little scene one tranquil evening last summer that illustrated both the sweet and bitter qualities rather forcibly. That, too, was a race. I came at the close of a woodland walk in a Midland county to a village green, a pretty pastoral place, on which were assembled the villagers—all the men and women and boys and girls of the village were apparently there—and as I stepped on to the grass a farmer driving by in his dog-cart pulled the rein and stopped on the roadway that skirted the green. The occasion of the gathering was a race between two village lads—little ruddy-faced fellows, who stood side by side, jacketless, and with naked feet.

'I know I can beat him,' said one.

'I know you can't,' said the other.

The race was run, and the victor, the first speaker, won with ease, and was loudly cheered. The vanquished lay down and cried, with his face buried in the grass, while the victor, with a proud step, marched across the green talking to the men. The defeated took his defeat greatly to heart, and words could not console him. Perhaps it was his first defeat. First defeats and first sorrows are always hard to bear, especially to untutored and untrained minds, let them come in what form they may. As none of us are privileged to run all the heats of life without being sometimes beaten, it is well for those who get their first experience early, when, if the pang is exceedingly bitter, there is the consolation that its duration will be all the more brief.

These considerations forced themselves upon me as I walked among

the throngs of students to the scene of the next contest. What a happy scene it was! What a pleasure, after the hard stones of the great metropolis, and the faces that one sees there, to tread on the soft, buoyant turf, and be surrounded only by the young and vigorous, to whom all the great cares of life were as yet unknown, who had, apparently, all the elements of success and all the qualifications for sustaining defeats with the easy, even humour of philosophical men, and whose enthusiasm for their representatives in the races was suggestive of that *esprit de corps* which rules over College life, and still exists when many years intervene between the day upon which College friendships and University associations are broken up. Meeting years hence on foreign shores, perhaps on battle-fields, or in the British House of Representatives, some links of the chain that bind Balliol men, or Trinity or Christ Church men together, will still be firm. Reminiscences of days like this will help to cement the friendship. How should men who to-day walk about the course arm-linked together separate to-morrow and forget the day, forget their companions in the boat, and in many a cricket eleven?

The bell rings, and a shout proclaims the first jump and cuts short my musings on the always suggestive and pleasant theme of College friendships. Again there are four competitors, equally divided between the light and the dark blues. It is not difficult to prophesy that the contest will end in another victory for the dark.

What varied movements the anatomy of the human frame admits! I was recently at an 'Assault of Arms' given in London by the Guardsmen for a charitable purpose. My admiration for the skill they displayed in the use of the small sword, the rapier, single-stick, and sabre was dwarfed by the superior attraction presented by the endless variety of positions and motions which those gladiator-like men assumed in the course of their attacks and defences upon each other. It requires such a demonstration of

skilled men to show how really marvellous, how full of grace and strength man is, or, by cultivation, may become. So is it, too, with the jumping. Every one of the competitors has an individual style. One comes up with an easy step, and after a preparatory stoop vaults over the bar, which is five feet high, with perfect ease, measuring the distance with complete accuracy, and alighting only a yard and a half from the spot at which he started. Another runs forward, and leaps, as the stag does, a long flying jump of four yards. A third, whose feet I observe are bootless, takes still fewer steps, and as he is passing over the bar he turns round, so that his face fronts the spot from which he started. The Oxford champion has yet to jump. It is Mr. Gooch, who is a wonderful leaper. The Oxonians remember the feats he performed two days ago, and as he removes his overcoat and discloses the dark-blue shirt of satin there is a cheer for him. His feet are cased in dainty white boots, his legs are bare (they are thin, but muscular), and he has the very physique of a jumper. Everybody wants to 'back him to win,' and nobody does so because nobody else doubts that he will win. Delicately he pats down the turf and scatters a handful of sawdust on the spot from which he means to start; the rains have made the turf soft, and even the long spikes might not be sufficient to hold him up. A little run—a stoop—a spring—over! Then the bar is raised another inch, and another, and another; and then the Cantabs, who jump well for all that—particularly the agile man who takes the stag-like leaps—begin to knock the bar down, and having done it twice, take a rather longer run, make a greater effort, and go over amid cries of 'Oh, well jumped indeed!' and the Cantabs begin to hope for victory, for that is five feet four inches high that they have cleared, and Mr. Gooch did no more against his Oxonian competitors. That gentleman follows, for the contest now remains between these two. He evidently does not believe in knock-

ing the bar down, and goes over beautifully: the higher the bar is raised the more grace he displays. There is a visible excitement among the collegians when Mr. Osborne walks slowly down the course, turns sharp round, and runs at the bar. His effort is vain, and his heels bring it down. Once again Mr. Gooch goes over, apparently with the greatest ease. As he reaches the highest point his long, lissome legs are drawn up, and he appears to be flying. Twice more did the Cantab gallantly strive to carry his toes over without touching, but failed; and then there were more triumphant cheers on the part of the Oxonians, for the second contest in the first year's inter-University sports was decided in their favour. The Oxonian afterwards delighted the spectators by leaping over the bar at 5 feet 6 inches height; and that, on the heavy turf that gave no spring, was a feat not often equalled.

England is disposed at the present time to set a very high value upon sinew and muscle. There are means by which these are attainable under special circumstances. Unfortunately these special circumstances are such as make them almost unattainable to the great majority of Englishmen. With the observance of the proper rules, there are hundreds of young men who might equal or surpass the feats of the University athletes. The Volunteer drill has been of incalculable service to our rising men. Athletic sports might be of still greater. As a means of promoting health and strength they and the training which prepares men for them are pre-eminent.

A great deal has recently been written and said on the subject of training. Let me employ the interval between the jump and the next race in adding yet a few words more. The subject is one of great interest, and it connects itself naturally with the sports I am describing.

Physically speaking, the trainer can do wonders with a man. There is scarcely a wider difference between two intellects naturally of

equal strength, one of which has been trained thoroughly and the other left entirely dependent upon itself, than between a man living according to the customary habits of society and one who is what is technically described as 'in condition.' Supposing the two men to be of the same natural proportions, the one will be able to do a giant's work, the other a dwarf's. This was partially exemplified according to the different degree of 'training' the competitors had undergone; in many races some of the runners came in scarcely in worse condition than they started, some panting and thoroughly exhausted. The well-trained men were very pleasant to look upon. The most had been made of their natural resources, their limbs were beautifully symmetrical, and the clear complexion and whiteness of their flesh might have vied with the colour of the paper upon which these words are printed. Why, then, the reader will ask, do not all men who covet strength, ability to endure long walks, long hours of labour, or capacity for great activity, 'train?' The answer is simple. It is an art in itself. To be followed with complete success it requires a man's whole attention, and men cannot afford to pay such a price for even the elastic step, the fair skin, and the hard muscle of the trained athlete. The ordinary occupations of life forbid the attempt; the luxuries of life would nullify its good effects; and it is generally incompatible with the conditions under which we live in the present age. 'Early to bed and early to rise' is a very excellent rule, but it is continually being violated by the very men who wish to be strong. The special diets—fear not, gentle reader, that I am about to enter into the details of the trainer's art, to which you might object—are moreover impossible; the strict regimen cannot be observed; the giving up of cigars and wines, operas and suppers, balls and theatres, possible to the students at the Universities and the 'professionals,' before great events at given periods, is difficult, to those in the stream, in



the life of London. For training to be really effectual such things must be relinquished, and this is but the least part of the business. Constant exercise at stated periods, followed by changes of dress, cold baths, and many other proceedings which cannot be taken by men of business, are also necessary. It is true that these laws, which are considered absolute for great contests, may be modified for lighter ones, and are very frequently put into practice in a more gentle form. The London rowing clubs that are now so numerous, and that celebrate so many excellent matches every year on our river, are, for the most part, composed of professional gentlemen and City men. They also celebrate athletic sports, and for both of these they 'train' to a certain extent, but they do it under great difficulties. Taking these into consideration, it is not too much to say that they do it with a great degree of success. They find it impossible all the year round, their imperative duties, their professional avocations, office and city work, and indeed the whole routine of their life, compels them to violate, if not hygienic laws, those of the trainer.

The 'trainer' enables a man to walk twenty miles with far greater ease when he has been 'brought into condition' than he could previously walk half that distance. This, my readers will say, is a positive good. The statement may be admitted, there is an increase of power in one direction without any loss in another. Yet it does not follow that all training is good or desirable. Very much of that which now takes place is unquestionably injurious. A man who would 'train' for 'the eight' need have an iron constitution. The work which the crews that met on the Thames on the 19th of last month went through was very great, such as the majority of men could not possibly withstand. The honour of a place in the representative 'eight' of the Universities has been purchased in many instances at the cost of years of life. It very frequently happens that the injury done by over-training does not show itself at once,

and afterwards it may assume only the form of ordinary disease and be attributed to other causes. But the severity of the training which is applied to the champion oarsmen, and the great test that is put upon their strength amid the excitement of the contest, taxes the system so greatly that the balance is, in many cases, equally poised, and events that would, but for that strain, have been powerless for injury, turn the scale to the wrong side and the oarsman sinks. I have no desire to draw a gloomy picture, but much that is mistaken has got abroad on the subject. It is assuring to see that the attention of the friends of crack oarsmen has been directed to this state of the case, and changes were in consequence made in the Cambridge crew. It requires a considerable amount of moral courage to interfere with the arrangements of so national an affair as is the annual eight-oared race on the Thames, especially in a case like that in which an oarsman was taken from the crew because there was reason to fear—not evidence to prove, be it observed, that can only come after the trial is made, and the injury, if there be such, is done and irreparable—that the constitution could not safely pass the ordeal.

The training required for athletic sports is widely different to this. It is general; in it there is no danger: the weak may become strong under it, and the strong will certainly become stronger. The training is not like that for the boat-race, nor like that which a Derby horse undergoes, and by means of which it comes to the post with a good chance of winning the race and almost an equally good one of breaking down utterly and for ever. General principles founded upon hygienic laws are chiefly relied upon. 'Make the man as healthy and generally strong as you can,' is the law, and nobody will question the value of that. The athletes of the Universities ran no risk. They were young, and strong, and long of wind, and art had simply aided nature in making the most of those qualities. Probably the competitors had, at no previous period of their

lives, been so healthy and strong as on the day they came to the starting-post. Herein lies one of the greatest claims these sports have, and one of the greatest reasons for the extension of them that is now taking place. 'How strange it is,' was a remark I heard many times on the cricket-ground at Oxford, 'that the Universities have never challenged each other to this kind of contest before!' It is not an unreasonable matter of surprise. Apart from the physical benefits to be derived from them, they are such popular sources of recreation. From the day nurse, acting as starter, cries—

'Bell horses, bell horses, what time o' day?  
One o'clock, two o'clock, three and away'—

up to the solemn one when we resign bats and balls to our sons, race-running, jumping, and walking matches are very popular. Possibly the reason was, that pedestrianism had fallen so low that no respectable man dare be seen at a foot-race, even though 'Deerfoot,' who popularised it very much, was one of the competitors. It remained for the Universities to take it out of the mire and make it possible for reverend gentlemen to attend, and ladies to look on with pleasure, and the editor to permit this article to appear in 'London Society.'

'Clear the course,' cried the stewards, as I stepped over the ropes, which is a privilege accorded to journalists, and without waiting for a repetition of the command, as it is the custom of that portion of the British public who attend race-courses to do, the gentlemen at once got outside the ropes, and Mr. Darbyshire, the winner of the first race, took a little canter that inspired his friends with confidence, though he again had for a competitor a formidable opponent who, if his legs were not actually of sufficient length to warrant the supposition that he was a descendant of the original owner of the seven-league boots, was at least tall enough to dwarf and dismay so much less a man as Mr. Darbyshire, although in the shorter distance of one hundred yards that gentleman had beaten him. A buzzing of voices, a cry from the

lower end of 'They're off,' and away went the four competitors. The Cambridge men having been twice beaten, were very glad to see the long legs carry their owner well in front, while Mr. Darbyshire went steadily several yards in the rear. Who was the philosophizer and moralizer who declared that everything in life depended on a good start? I recollect such a maxim being impressed upon me early in life, and I called it to mind as the racers went down the course and turned. The popular opinion was, that the Cantab had made a good start and would win. But he didn't. Whatever it may be in real life, it isn't in a race a good thing to start at full speed. Once more there was joy among the Oxonians, and the dark-blue triumphed over the light amid waving hats and shouts of 'Darbyshire.'

The intervals are long and the races short; 56 seconds have sufficed for the quarter of a mile. The jubilant Oxonians wend their way to the hurdle-race course; some are joking, some whistling the air of the new and popular College song the 'Buttery Hatch,' all are in high spirits. Is it not natural in them to be so? Victory is sweet and they are victorious. It is 'play time' with them, and their play is of an inspiring, exhilarating kind.

As they pass the pavilion 'the Hammer' is observed and its weight is nicely tested. Did you ever see the hammer thrown, reader? I do not mean an ordinary hammer thrown in an ordinary fashion, but such as that used by the collegians trying their strength with its aid. It most nearly resembles a paviour's hammer. The stem is long, and at the head there is a circular piece of iron. It weighs 21 lbs. It is not one of the 'events' in the programme, of this, the champions' day's sports. I saw six men, fine stalwart fellows most of them were, trying their skill in the inclosure there two days ago. There are many ways of throwing; some are very eccentric and amusing. One retired six paces from the line of tape before which the hammer had to be loosed, and there held it out at arm's length, then swung it

three times, taking a jump each time, and letting it go at the last. That did not succeed. Another stood by the line and swung it thrice backwards and forwards with terrific force, loosing the handle when it was at its greatest altitude. That made a capital throw, though not the best. Mr. Morgan, of Jesus College, whose physique was slighter than those of most of the others, then essayed, and he sent it 83 ft. 2 in. The way he threw was charming. Taking the hammer in his hand, he measured about four paces from the line, and then turned his face from it. He held the bottom of the handle with the grip of a vice in both hands, extending them above his head. The firm set muscles, at the top of each arm, were visible beneath his shirt. For a few seconds he stood in this position, getting the perfect poise of the hammer; then he lowered it, waltzed round three times very rapidly, and, stopping just short of the line, let the unwieldy instrument loose. It had travelled upwards of 27 yards when it fell to the ground, ploughing up the turf. Strength is much, but skill is more in this contest. Mr. Morgan was probably anything but the strongest man among the six who threw this hammer, and a novice, though a strong man, would find it difficult, if not impossible, to throw it a score of yards in half a day's practice. I saw some tyros try. The result was rather amusing.

4. *A Hurdle-Race, 120 yds., over 10 Flights.* That was what I read on my card as I walked away rapidly to the hurdle-race course, where six competitors were already assembled; and as I reached the spot they started all abreast, and all leaping the first six hurdles at the same instant of time. The sun had just come from behind a cloud and shone full upon them as they dashed on, taking a leap at every fourth or fifth stride. What a jolly affair a hurdle-race is! What a pleasant feeling it gives to the runners, who when, as we used to say in schoolboy days, the 'steam is up' luxuriate in a sense of power that has long lain dormant, and make leaps and run as they have never run before! I don't

suppose this was the case with the Cantabs and Oxonians. They had practised industriously, but for them there was the additional excitement which attends a great contest; the applause of the students was showered upon the best men, and the Oxonians raised their voices in honour of the Cantab who leapt the last hurdle breast to breast with a dark-blue and then shot away beyond the winning post, and won by a few inches. That little struggle for mastery, during the last two seconds, was a fine display. There were three competitors, and it was not easy to say one was before the other till the last stride was made, and the first breast came in contact with the tape.

The course had to be crossed again for the next competition, which was a long jump. Some of the spectators, by way of enlivening the business of getting over, essayed a walking race, which reminds me that there is no such item down upon the card. This I regret. Few kinds of races are more interesting than walking matches. Everybody appreciates them because everybody has to walk.

In the three days' Cambridge sports there were some feats not to be found on the Oxford card, or the inter-University one. The most important of these was a seven miles walking race. In these days, when men 'do' Devonshire with a knapsack in a fortnight, this practical test of the powers of getting along is a good one. Nine men came out to compete for the prize, but only four came past the winning post. What of the others? They had given in by the wayside. Three I find by a report, 'went to have some beer and were no more seen.' And what more natural? Have not you, reader, a pleasant recollection of some roadside inn, at which at the close of a country ramble you have enjoyed a glass of sparkling 'home brewed' and some bread and cheese? The dish may be humble, but it is sweet to the hungry, after the fresh invigorating air of the country. But this walk was in a cricket-ground, on a circular course that had to be traversed twenty-eight

times to make the seven miles, and there was no scenery to admire and no time to admire it, if there had been. So they walked away, and this was one of those few races in which it is as well to go 'slow and steady,' if you wish to win. Some of the competitors did not think so and started off at a swinging pace, and probably it was these who found, during the seventeenth 'lap,' that they had, like the hare in the fable, a little time to spare, and further like the hare, prolonged their nap or stay until the race was won. Meanwhile the others went on walking round and round till the spectators got weary of watching them.

Impromptu walking matches are of very common occurrence among friends who take rambles together. I have seen a great number, and fair walking is seldom practised. The Cantab athletes set an example worthy of imitation in this matter. They *walked*. They did not jump or hop along doubled up. 'Fair toe and heel' was the rule. If you watch twenty persons in the street, you will observe that in every case the heel of the first foot touches the ground before the toe of the last leaves it. That is the criterion of fair walking. Keep to that and go as fast as you can. It was a fine sight to see those nine men start on their race. Dancing and skating, running and rowing, and riding, are fine exercises; but for dignity and beauty of movement they are not equal to walking, when a good athlete, who has studied walking, is the performer. Englishmen walk with more manliness and grace than any other people I have seen; yet an observer in our streets will, if he turns his attention to the matter (this is very seldom done: I make you a present of the suggestion, reader; follow it next time you walk from Trafalgar Square to Temple Bar; it will be quite as interesting as the study of coats, booksellers' shops, or photographic collections of theatrical celebrities in the windows), come to the conclusion that not more than one-fourth of the men he meets know how to walk as well as they might. I am not now speaking of walking as applied to matches.

I have taken advantage of my subject to make a little digression. The subject is not unimportant, so I hope I may be pardoned.

The competitors in the race started with straight knees and upright figures. Their shoulders were well back and their heads erect. Such an attitude as that shows off a well-proportioned man; but then comes the feature which makes the defect, from a spectator's point of view, in a walking match—the arms are bent at the elbow and the hands point upward. This destroys much grace, but for speed and the avoidance of fatigue is absolutely necessary. In such a 'form,' with long and steady strides, did Mr. Doig of St. John's walk seven miles in the space of time which an Englishman ordinarily takes for a walk of four—1 hour 4 minutes and 18 seconds. And three of his fellow-students were only from 42 seconds up to 2 minutes 10 seconds longer over the journey.

Everybody had made up their minds who was to win the long jump. Had not Mr. Booth of Cambridge jumped 18 feet 6½ inches on Fenner's Cricket-ground, while Mr. Gooch, the champion of Oxford, had only jumped 18 feet and half an inch? Nobody could deny these facts, and so nobody disputed the general assertion that Mr. Booth would win. He did not, however. The event was another, and the last, triumph of that day for the Oxonians. Mr. Gooch, who leapt like an antelope—fancy going 18 feet in a leap—gained the honour for Merton College, Oxford. The ground—level grass land made hard by years of 'rolling' for cricket—was wet upon the surface, and Mr. Booth, at the finish of a long jump, made a gambol and hurt his wrist. Probably but for this, the result might have been other than it was.

This trivial accident was the only one of the day. What a contrast to the long list of casualties, broken heads, and fractured bones, that occurred of old at English athletic gatherings like those great ones that took place annually on the Cotswold Hills and upon Hargreave Moor, where the stalwart Cornish men met to wrestle, and throw the

bar, and the sledge, and toes the pike, and indulge in cudgel-play! Here, upon the College grounds, you may see men who have Saxon blood in their veins as surely as had those remnants of the race who held their own in the wild mountains of Devon and Cornwall. There is much of the ancient fire in them after all these generations and centuries, but it is toned down, and they enjoy the refined sports of to-day not less than did those who assembled in the western corner of the island of old. The contrast, whether it be of the men or the sports, is wholly in favour of the modern ones, though the feats are less wonderful and the athletes not so powerful.

Looking back upon the athletic sports of England, in the days when pastimes were taken up or abandoned by royal command—in the semi-military period when every man was half a soldier, when Moor-fields was properly described by its name, and quintains were set up on Cornhill and on the river, and contrasting them with those of to-day, what a change is observable! The subject is full of interest, for the history of our country is traceable in the games that have prevailed. But the bell has rung for another race, evening is giving signs of its approach, and the two great events of the day have yet to be decided.

Another hurdle-race, ending in a victory for Cambridge, is followed by the mile of level running. To this event everybody looks with great interest, and as the competitors make their appearance they are scrutinized with critical eyes. Everybody is very anxious to see Mr. Lawes, who is the crack runner of the light-blues, and presently a gentleman with very dark hair hanging loosely about his brows comes trotting round the course, and an enthusiastic Trinity man asks him 'How he feels,' and is delighted to receive for an answer, 'All right, as far as I know.' Next comes Mr. Hannam, of Merton; he won the Oxford mile-race two days ago, and his colleagues believe he can win it again to-day. They don't take into account the fact that he has not yet had time to recover from the ex-

haustion of that triumph—a fact which may be discerned on glancing from him to Mr. Lawes, whose cheeks are glowing and whose attitudes are suggestive of great vigour and powers of endurance; and even the staunchest supporters of the Oxonian lose something of their confidence in the event terminating as they wish.

'I shall say, "Are you ready? Go!"' the starter said; and then, he having pronounced the phrase, they broke away. The course, which was circular, was only a quarter of a mile, so that they had to pass the starting-line four times. Even at the first it was evident that Mr. Hannam felt the fatigue of his previous race, yet he kept close to his opponent; and Cantabs and Oxonians ran round and met them at points crying, 'Hannam!' and 'Lawes!'

When it came to the last 'lap'—that is the professional term—the race began. Not that they had not been racing before; the three-quarters of a mile had been traversed in a little over three minutes. I mean the struggle for victory. For a little way it was a grand one. The two best men—the favourites—were first and second, and the second made up his mind to catch the first. He did it, too, amid the loud acclamations of thousands of voices shouting his name. Boldly at a wonderful speed he ran till he was breast to breast with his opponent, and for twenty yards each ran his best. Then Lawes went forward and Hannam dropped behind, and all his after efforts were in vain. Victory was with the Cantabs. It is not much to describe, but it was a sight to see, and having seen, to remember how gallantly they struggled while the contest was even.

And now remains but the steeple-chase—it is over two miles of fair hunting country. The flags mark out the course; whole fields are under water, for the river has overflowed its banks. There are wire fences, stiff rails, thick, thorny hedges, and 'bullfinches' innumerable. There is a brook jump, too, far away, but with the aid of my glasses I can see its breadth and the water, and it is very broad, and,

in fact, a formidable brook for human legs to leap. The spectators like formidable brooks, and rather relish seeing the runners get in. As this fate is nearly sure to befall one or more of them, the majority go off at once to take up a favourable position in the vicinity. Here and there a stranger turns round to look at a group of collegians, among whom are one or two of the 'eight,' it is whispered; and there is a sudden desire on the part of many persons to 'lay the odds against the light-blues,' for the whisper goes round that they have been the 'Long Distance' once or twice, and are in remarkably good 'form,' whatever that may mean. Ere these lines see the light that contest, too, will have been decided. Were it otherwise, I might, after the fashion of sporting men, utter a prophecy anent the final issue.

'Here they come!' and true enough *they* were coming. Six men in white and blue, as I turned, were leaping over a quickset hedge into a newly-ploughed field. The rain had made the soil soft, and at every step the feet of the racers went deep into it. Fortunately on leaping the next hedge they had a convenient opportunity of washing the earth that clung to them away, for the next thirty yards of running was through a pool. Running in water is neither an easy nor a pleasant feat, but they dashed on, the Oxonian favourite acting as pioneer. The country was something more than 'fair': it was very rough, the hedges were high, and the lane that had to be crossed was a foot deep in a damp, clayey mixture. Here, if ever, strength and power of endurance were needed. They were found, too, and presently all the competitors were seen climbing up the hill out of the valley, and glad, no doubt, to leave behind them the sloughs in which it abounded. And now the spectators began to get excited. The competitors, running in many instances with uncovered legs, saturated with water, splashed with mud, torn by briars and hawthorn hedges, as they leapt the iron railings into the 'home field,' presented a woe-begone spectacle,

but, withal, were happy representatives of the Universities that honour and love all exhibitions of 'British Pluck.' Two seemed 'iron-jointed, supple sinewed.' They were Mr. Gurnett and Mr. Webster, of Trinity College, Cambridge, the first and second, who dashed along the course at the close as fast as they went, while the hedges and the water were still before them.

So ended the Oxford and Cambridge University Sports—the most important gathering of the kind that has taken place for a century. In the fulness of time—for it will become an institution, as the boat-race and the cricket-match has—they cannot fail to be highly beneficial. Cricket, rowing, and athletic sports are lessons in the art of power. The intuitive love of power makes the students desire to excel in them, and by their aid strength and health will be developed. The brain is all the better able to do its work when the limbs are vigorous, and, happily, vigorous limbs and robust frames are not scarce at our Universities; and the picture that paints the student pale and worn is no longer a faithful portrait.

Passing over Magdalen Bridge and down High Street, looking from my cab at the groups of students discussing on their way back to their colleges the games of the day, these reflections came as the natural sequel to the display of prowess I had witnessed.

In the soft sunset light of spring the classic city, hoar with antiquity, was suggestive of far different thoughts. But the cabman with remorseless haste hurried me on past all the venerable colleges—past the sombre gateway of ancient Balliol, from which the stone is peeling away and mouldering, making the outer walls look like the crust of an over-ripe cream cheese—past the newer colleges, the stones of which are smooth and sharp of edge, and so down to the Great Western Station, and away from Oxford with a pleasant memory of a happy day's sport, which will, I hope, have many a parallel in springs to come.

J. D. C.



1. The first step in the process of the investigation is the identification of the problem. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the study. The next step is to collect data. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the study. The next step is to analyze the data. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the study. The next step is to interpret the data. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the study. The next step is to report the results. This is done by the investigator who is responsible for the study.

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7. seventh of these is the fact that the  
8. eighth of these is the fact that the  
9. ninth of these is the fact that the  
10. tenth of these is the fact that the



Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

### THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY!

See "The Ordeal for Wrong," Chapter IV.

# LONDON SOCIETY.

MAY, 1864.

HOW CHARLIE BLAKE WENT IN FOR THE BUTTER.



HAVE you ever had a boom friend? By that I don't mean any one on whom you believe that every article called upon confides, but one to whom you have the suggestion of the best things, who is there; who has the best of your collar, even though you have looked at your hat down; who is sure may put his hand into your

pocket, take out the best clothing, and give you the change.

Such friends were Charlie Blake and I. We had been in the same side in all our quarrels at school. We had shared alike in teacher's wrath, our numbers had been two nearly home from home, and if I was ever bottomed on the class, I was sure to be backed "most true" against me.